



# **unfoldingWord® Translation Notes**

## **1 Corinthians**

**Version 85**

[en]

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interpret, interpretation, interpreter .....	799
judge, judgment .....	800
know, knew, knowledge, unknown, distinguish .....	802
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love, beloved .....	804
member, body parts .....	806
prophet, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess .....	807

redeem, redeemer, redemption .....	809
sexual immorality, immorality, immoral, fornication .....	810
spirit, wind, breath .....	811
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# **unfoldingWord® Translation Notes**

## **1 Corinthians**

## Introduction to 1 Corinthians

### Part 1: General Introduction

#### Outline of the Book of 1 Corinthians

Opening (1:1–9)  
Against divisions (1:10–4:15)  
Against sexual immorality (4:16–6:20)  
On abstinence (7:1–40)  
On food (8:1–11:1)  
On head coverings (11:2–16)  
On the Lord's Supper (11:17–34)  
On spiritual gifts (12:1–14:40)  
On the resurrection of the dead (15:1–58)  
On the collection and visits (16:1–12)  
Closing: final commands and greetings (16:13–24)

More detailed outlines for each of these sections appear in the chapter introductions.

#### Who Wrote the Book of 1 Corinthians?

The author identifies himself as Paul the apostle. Paul was from the city of Tarsus. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee, and he persecuted Christians. After he became a Christian, he traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire, telling people about Jesus. Paul first visited the Corinthians during his second time traveling around the Roman Empire (See: [Acts 18:1–18](#)). After that, Paul wrote this letter while he was in Ephesus ([16:8](#)). He lived and proclaimed the gospel there for more than two years (See: [Acts 19:1–10](#)), and it was sometime during those years that he wrote this letter to the Corinthians.

#### What Is the Book of 1 Corinthians about?

While Paul was in Ephesus, he learned things about the Corinthians. People from “Chloe” told Paul about “factions” in the Corinthian group ([1:11](#)), and the Corinthian believers wrote a letter to him asking questions ([7:1](#)). Paul also mentions that he has “heard” things about what they are doing and saying (See: [5:1](#); [11:18](#); [15:12](#)). He may have learned these things from the people “from Chloe,” from their letter, or from other sources, such as “Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus,” who visited Paul before he wrote this letter (See: [16:17](#)). Paul writes his letter in response to what he has learned about how the Corinthians are thinking and acting. He addresses multiple topics in order. You can see these topics in the outline above. Paul focuses on encouraging the Corinthian believers to remain faithful to Jesus and to behave as those who follow Jesus.

#### How Should the Title of this Book Be Translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, “First Corinthians” or “1 Corinthians.” Or they may choose a clearer title, such as “Paul’s First Letter to the Church in Corinth” or “A First Letter to the Christians in Corinth.” (See: **How to Translate Names (p.699)**)



## Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

### What was the city of Corinth like?

Corinth was a major city located in ancient Greece. Because it was near the Mediterranean Sea and in an important location, many travelers and traders came to buy and sell goods there. Therefore, many different kinds of people lived in the city, and there were many wealthy people. Also, people in Corinth worshiped many different gods, and their worship could include food and sexual activity. In this culture, Christians who did not participate in worshipping at least some of the many gods were often considered to be strange, and people would not want to associate with them.

### What was the issue that Paul was addressing in this letter?

Paul addresses many specific topics and issues in his letter to the Corinthian believers. These include church unity, sexual behavior, worship practices, food sacrificed to idols, spiritual gifts, and the resurrection. It is possible that all the problems that Paul wishes to correct in these areas come from one single issue in the Corinthian church. It could be that false teachers are leading the Corinthians astray, or it could be that the Corinthians are acting like everyone else in their culture, even when this is not properly following Jesus. Most likely, the Corinthians believed that they had already received all the blessings that Christians will receive when Jesus comes back to the earth. They may have also believed the false teaching that matter and physical things were less important than “spiritual” things. Whatever exactly the primary problem is, what is clear is that the Corinthians were not properly following Jesus in how they were thinking and acting, and Paul writes the letter to guide them back to faithfully following Jesus.

## Part 3: Important Translation Issues

### What does Paul mean when he talks about “wisdom” and “foolishness”?

These words do not refer primarily to how much or how little education someone has. Rather, they refer to how well or how poorly someone plans actions and knows how the world works. If someone creates plans and ideas that work out well, that person is wise. If someone creates plans and ideas that do not work out well, that person is foolish. The wise person makes good choices, and the foolish person makes bad choices. Paul uses these words to contrast what humans think is wise or foolish with what God thinks is wise or foolish. By doing this, Paul wishes to keep the Corinthians from thinking in ways that other humans consider to be “wise.” Rather, he wishes them to think in ways that God considers to be “wise,” which are ways that the other humans might consider to be “foolish.”

### What does Paul mean when he talks about “knowledge”?

Paul uses “knowledge” to refer to comprehending or understanding what is true about God and the world. Paul emphasizes that no one really has “knowledge” without the help of the Holy Spirit. He also wants those who have this “knowledge” to continue to act in ways that respect and honor those who do not have the “knowledge.” In other words, he wants to convince the Corinthians that acting in love toward fellow believers is more valuable than any “knowledge.” So, Paul argues that “knowledge” is valuable, but other things are more important.

### What does Paul mean when he talks about “power” and “weakness”?

Someone who has “power” has much influence and authority and can accomplish many things. Someone who has “weakness” does not have much influence and authority and is not able to accomplish many things. Paul contrasts what humans think is powerful or weak with what God thinks is powerful or weak. By doing this, Paul wishes to keep the Corinthians from acting in ways that other humans think are “powerful.” Rather, he wishes them to act in ways that God considers “powerful,” which are ways that the other humans might consider to be “weak.”

## What did Paul mean by the expressions “in Christ,” “in the Lord,” etc.?

Paul uses the spatial metaphor “in Christ” (often with another name for “Christ,” such as “Lord” or “Jesus”) very frequently in this letter. This metaphor emphasizes that believers are as closely united to Christ as if they were inside him. Paul believes that this is true for all believers, and sometimes he uses “in Christ” simply to identify that what he is speaking about is true for those who believe in Jesus. Other times, he emphasizes union with Christ as the means or the basis for some statement or exhortation. See the notes on specific verses for help in understanding the contextual meaning of “in Christ” and related phrases. (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## How should “brothers” be translated?

Many times in this letter, Paul directly addresses or refers to people he calls “brothers.” Often, a direct address to the “brothers” indicates that Paul is beginning a new section. The word “brothers” refers in general to fellow believers, both male and female. Paul uses this word because he considers believers to be as closely united together as siblings in a family. Consider what word or phrase would best express both the reference to fellow believers and the idea that these fellow believers are as close as family members. (See: [\[\[rc://\\*/tw/dict/bible/kt/brother\]\]](#))

## How should extended metaphors be translated?

Throughout this letter, Paul uses long or extended metaphors. In [3:1–17](#), he speaks about children, farming, construction, and temples to discuss how he and others who preach the gospel should relate to the Corinthians. In [5:6–8](#), he uses the Jewish festival of Passover to encourage the Corinthians to behave in a certain way. In [9:9–11](#), he uses a farming metaphor to speak about receiving money for preaching the gospel, and in [9:24–27](#), he uses metaphors related to athletic competitions to encourage the Corinthians to behave in a certain way. In [12:12–27](#), Paul uses the human body as an analogy and metaphor for the church. Finally, in [15:36–38, 42–44](#), Paul uses a farming metaphor to speak about the resurrection of the dead. Since these extended metaphors are a significant part of Paul’s argument in these sections, you should retain the metaphors in your translation if possible or express the idea by using an analogy. See the chapter introductions and notes for more information and translation options. (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

## How should rhetorical questions be translated?

Paul asks many questions in this letter. He does not ask these questions because he wants the Corinthians to provide him with information. Rather, he asks these questions because he wants the Corinthians to think about how they are acting and what they are thinking. The questions encourage them to think along with Paul. If your readers would understand these kinds of questions, you should retain them in your translation. If your readers would understand these kinds of questions, you could supply the answers or express the questions as statements. See the notes on each rhetorical question for the implied answer and ways to translate the question as a statement. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## How should euphemisms be translated?

Paul uses euphemisms in multiple places in this letter, particularly when he is discussing sexual activity or death. If possible, use similar euphemisms in your translation. See the notes on each verse that has a euphemism for translation options. (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

## How should “you” and “we” be translated?

Throughout the letter, you should assume that “you,” “your,” and “yours” are plural and refer to the Corinthian believers unless a note specifies that the form of “you” is singular. Similarly, throughout the letter, you should

assume that “we,” “us,” “our,” and “ours” include Paul, those who work with Paul, and the Corinthian believers unless a notes specifies that the form of “we” excludes the Corinthian believers. (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-yousingular\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-exclusive\]\]](#))

## What are the major issues in the text of the Book of 1 Corinthians?

In the following verses, ancient manuscripts do not all have the same words. The ULT uses the words that are found in most of the earliest manuscripts. When you translate these verses, you should compare the ULT with any translations that your readers may be familiar with to see what your readers may expect. Unless there is a good reason to use the alternate words, you should follow the ULT. See the footnotes and notes at each of these verses for more information. (See: **Textual Variants (p.775)**)

- “the mystery of God” (2:1). Some ancient manuscripts have this: “the testimony of God.”
- “God judges” (5:13). Some ancient manuscripts have this: “God will judge.”
- “glorify God in your body” (6:20). Some ancient manuscripts have this: “glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which belong to God.”
- “as under the law, not being under the law myself in order to gain those under the law” (9:20). Some ancient manuscripts have this: “as under the law in order to gain those under the law.”
- “put the Lord to the test” (10:9). Some ancient manuscripts have this: “put Christ to the test.”
- “and conscience—” (10:28). Some ancient manuscripts have this: “and conscience, for the earth and everything in it belong to the Lord—”
- “I hand over my body so that I might boast” (13:3). Some ancient manuscripts have this: “I hand over my body to be burned.”
- “let him be ignorant” (14:38). Some ancient manuscripts have this: “he is considered ignorant.”
- “let us also bear” (15:49). Some ancient manuscripts have this: “we will also bear.”
- “Amen” (16:24). Some ancient manuscripts do not have “Amen.”

# 1 Corinthians 1

## 1 Corinthians 1 General Notes

### Structure and Formatting

Opening (1:1–9)

- Greetings and Blessing (1:1–3)
- Praise and Prayer (1:4–9)

Against divisions (1:10–4:15)

- Divisions, Leaders, and Baptism (1:10–17)
- Wisdom, Foolishness, and Boasting (1:18–31)

Some translations set each line of poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to make it easier to read. The ULT does this with the words of verse 19, which are from the Old Testament.

## Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

### Disunity

In this chapter, Paul urges the Corinthians to stop dividing up into smaller groups that identify themselves with one specific leader. He mentions some of the leaders, including himself, in [1:12](#). The Corinthians probably chose these leaders themselves, since there is no evidence that any of the people mentioned in [1:12](#) were trying to create their own groups. People in the Corinthian church were probably trying to sound wiser or more powerful than other people, so they would choose a group and a leader and say they were better than others. Paul argues against these kinds of divisions first, and then he argues against anyone who tries to sound wiser and more powerful than others.

### Wisdom and foolishness

Throughout this chapter, Paul speaks of both wisdom and foolishness. These words do not refer primarily to how much or how little education someone has. Rather, they refer to how well or how poorly someone plans actions and knows how the world works. If someone creates plans and ideas that work out well, that person is wise. If someone creates plans and ideas that do not work out well, that person is foolish. The wise person makes good choices, and the foolish person makes bad choices. Use words in your language that indicate these ideas. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/wise\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/foolish\]\]](#))

### Power and weakness

Throughout this chapter, Paul speaks of both power and weakness. These words primarily refer to how much influence and authority a person has and to how much they can accomplish. Someone who has “power” has much influence and authority and can accomplish many things. Someone who has “weakness” does not have much influence and authority and is not able to accomplish many things. Use words in your language that indicate these ideas (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/power\]\]](#))

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Metaphors about Christ

In this chapter, Paul says that “Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1:24) and that Christ “was made for us wisdom from God, righteousness, and also sanctification and redemption” (1:30). With these two verses, Paul is not saying that Christ is no longer a person and is instead these abstract ideas. Rather, Paul is speaking in this way because Christ and his work for believers include all of these abstract ideas. Christ’s work is powerful and wise, and gives those who believe in him wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. For ways to translate these two statements, see the notes on these two verses.

### Rhetorical questions

Paul asks many questions in this chapter. He is not asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to provide him with information. Rather, he is asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to think about how they are acting and what they are thinking. The questions encourage them to think along with Paul. For ways to translate these questions, look for the notes on each verse that includes these kinds of questions. (See:

**Rhetorical Question (p.766))**

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Positive and negative uses of “wisdom”

Throughout this chapter, Paul speaks about wisdom in both positive and negative ways. He uses the same words throughout the chapter, and he distinguishes between positive and negative meanings by connecting the words to different people or ideas. For example, he speaks of wisdom negatively when it is the wisdom of the world, or the wisdom of humans. However, he speaks of wisdom positively when it is wisdom from God or wisdom given by God. If possible, translate the negative and positive meanings of wisdom with the same word, just as Paul uses one word for both negative and positive. If you must use different words, use positive words for God’s wisdom and negative words for human wisdom.

### Using different perspectives

Sometimes, Paul speaks of God as if God were “foolish” and “weak” (1:25) and as if he chose “foolish” and “weak” things (1:27). Paul does not actually think that God is foolish and weak and chooses foolish and weak things. Rather, he is speaking from the perspective of normal human thinking. What God does, from a human perspective, is “weak” and “foolish.” He makes this clear in several verses. For example, in 1:26, Paul says that most of the Corinthians were not wise “according to the flesh.” This is Paul’s way of saying that they were not wise according to human thinking. If possible translate the times Paul speaks from a human perspective with the same words he uses for “weakness” and “foolishness” when he speaks from God’s perspective. If it is necessary to distinguish these uses, use a word or phrase that explains which perspective Paul is using. He does this himself sometimes, and if it is necessary, you could do it in other places as well.

### Information presented out of order

The ULT puts parentheses around 1:16 because Paul is speaking about whom he baptized, an idea that fits logically with 1:14 and not as well after 1:15. Paul has remembered someone else that he baptized, and instead of going back and putting that information in 1:14, he includes it in 1:16, interrupting the flow of the argument. If possible, keep 1:16 where it is, and use a form in your language that indicates that Paul is interrupting his argument. If there is no way to do this in your language, you could move 1:16 so that it is between 1:14 and 1:15.

## 1 Corinthians 1:1

### Paul

In this culture, letter writers would give their own names first, referring to themselves in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the first person here. Or if your language has a particular way of introducing the author of a letter, and if it would be helpful to your readers, you could use it here. Alternate translation: "From Paul. I have been" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.687)**)

### called {to be} an apostle of Christ Jesus

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on who is **called** rather than focusing on the person doing the "calling." Alternate translation: "whom Christ Jesus called to be an apostle" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### by the will of God

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **the will** that **God** has. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind that this phrase refers to what God wills with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "because God desired this" (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### and Sosthenes

This phrase means that **Sosthenes** is with Paul, and Paul writes the letter for both of them. It does not mean that Sosthenes was the scribe who wrote the letter down. It also does not mean that Sosthenes dictated the letter with Paul, since Paul uses the first-person singular more than the first-person plural in the letter. If there is a way in your language to indicate that Paul writes on behalf of Sosthenes, you could use it here. Alternate translation: "and I write on behalf of Sosthenes" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### Sosthenes

**Sosthenes** is the name of a man. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.699)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:2

### to the church of God that is in Corinth

In this culture, after giving their own names, letter writers would name those to whom they sent the letter, referring to them in the third person. If that is confusing in your language, you could use the second person here. Or if your language has a particular way of introducing the recipient of a letter, and if it would be helpful to your readers, you could use it here. Alternate translation: “This letter is for you who are members of the church of God at Corinth” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.687)**)

### having been sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **sanctified** and **called** rather than focusing on the person doing the “sanctifying” and “calling.” If you must state who does the actions, Paul implies that “God” does them. Alternate translation: “whom God has sanctified in Christ Jesus, and whom God has called to be saints” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### in Christ Jesus

Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in Christ Jesus** to describe the union of believers with Christ. In this case, being **in Christ Jesus**, or united to Christ, could explain: (1) the means by which God has sanctified the Corinthians. Alternate translation: “by means of your union with Christ Jesus” (2) the reason why God has sanctified the Corinthians. Alternate translation: “because of your union with Christ Jesus” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### in every place

Here Paul describes all believers as if they were **in every place**. He speaks this way to emphasize that believers can be found in many countries, towns, and villages. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **in every place** to indicate that believers are found in many places around the world. Alternate translation: “in many places” (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

### calling on the name of our Lord

The **calling on the name of** someone is an idiom that refers to worshiping and praying to that person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this phrase with a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “who pray to and venerate our Lord” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### theirs and ours

In the phrase **theirs and ours**, Paul has left out words that may be needed in some languages to make a complete thought. If you cannot leave out these words in your language, you could supply words such as “who is” and “Lord” to make a complete thought. Alternate translation: “who is Lord over them and us” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:3

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

After stating his name and the name of the person to whom he is writing, Paul adds a blessing for the Corinthians. Use a form that people would recognize as a blessing in your language. Alternate translation: “May you experience kindness and peace within you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus the Messiah” or “I pray that grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus the Messiah will always be with you” (See: **Blessings (p.633)**)



## 1 Corinthians 1:4

### always

Here, **always** is an exaggeration that the Corinthians would have understood to emphasize how often Paul prays for the Corinthians. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **always** with a word that indicates frequency. Alternate translation: “consistently” or “frequently” (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

### to my God

When Paul speaks of **my God**, he does not mean that this is a different **God** than the one the Corinthians believe in. Rather, he simply wishes to state that this **God** is his God. If **my God** in your translation sounds like it makes a distinction between Paul's God and the Corinthians' God, you could use a plural pronoun. Alternate translation: “to our God” (See: **Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding (p.670)**)

### the one having been given

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the **grace** that was **given** rather than the person doing the “giving.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “that he gave” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### in Christ Jesus

Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in Christ Jesus** to describe the union of believers with Christ. In this case, being **in Christ Jesus**, or united to Christ, could explain: (1) the means by which God has given grace to the Corinthians. Alternate translation: “by means of your union with Christ Jesus” (2) the reason why God has given grace to the Corinthians. Alternate translation: “because of your union with Christ Jesus” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:5

### For

Here, **For** introduces an explanation of “the grace of God that was given” in 1:4. Use a word or phrase that introduces a further explanation or elaboration in your language. Alternate translation: “That is,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### everything

Alternate translation: “every way”

### you were made rich

Here Paul speaks as if the Corinthians had received a lot of money **in him**. With this language of being **rich**, Paul means that the Corinthians have received more than they need, and 1:7 shows that what they have received are spiritual blessings and gifts. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **made rich** to: (1) express this idea with a phrase that refers to how much God has given them. Alternate translation: “you were given many gifts” (2) clarify that Paul speaks of spiritual riches. Alternate translation: “you were made spiritually rich” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### you were made rich

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **made rich** rather than the person “making” them **rich**. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God has made you rich” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### in him

Here, **him** refers to Jesus, since God the Father is the one who makes the Corinthians rich. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **him** with the words “Christ” or “Christ Jesus” to make this clear. Alternate translation: “in Christ Jesus” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### all word

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **word**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “speak” or “say.” Alternate translation: “everything you speak” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### all knowledge

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **knowledge**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “know.” Alternate translation: “everything you know” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:6

### just as

Here, **just as** could introduce: (1) the reason why the Corinthians were made rich. Alternate translation: “which is due to how” (2) a comparison that illustrates how the Corinthians were made rich. Alternate translation: “in the same way that” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### the testimony of Christ has been confirmed

In this verse, Paul speaks as if what he told the Corinthians about Christ were testimony he gave as a witness in a court of law. This testimony has been **confirmed**, just as if other evidence proved to the judge that his **testimony** was accurate. With this metaphor, Paul reminds the Corinthians that they have believed the message about Christ and that it is now an important part of their lives. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this metaphor with a comparable metaphor or express it plainly. Alternate translation: “our message about Christ has been established” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### the testimony of Christ

Here Paul uses the possessive form to speak about a **testimony** that concerns **Christ**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make it explicit that **Christ** is the content of the **testimony**. Alternate translation: “the testimony about Christ” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### the testimony of Christ has been confirmed

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what is **confirmed** rather than the person doing the “confirming.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God has confirmed the testimony of Christ” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:7

### so that

Here, **so that** could introduce: (1) a result from “being made rich” in 1:5 and from the confirmation of the “testimony” in 1:6. If you use one of the following alternate translations, you may need to end the previous sentence with a period and begin a new sentence. Alternate translation: “God has made you rich and confirmed our testimony so that” (2) a result from just the confirmation in 1:6. Alternate translation: “God confirmed our testimony among you so that” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### you do not lack in any gift

Here Paul uses two negative words, **not** and **lack**, to express a strong positive meaning. He means that the Corinthians have every spiritual gift that God gives. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form in positive form. Alternate translation: “you have every gift” (See: **Litotes (p.724)**)

### gift, eagerly waiting for

Here, **eagerly waiting for** introduces something that happens at the same time as not lacking **in any gift**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection explicitly. Alternate translation: “gift while you eagerly wait for” (See: **Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship (p.660)**)

### the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe a **revelation** whose content is **our Lord Jesus Christ**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this explicit by translating the phrase with a verb with “God” or **our Lord Jesus Christ** as the subject. Alternate translation: “God to reveal our Lord Jesus Christ” or “our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ

In this context, it is clear that Paul does not simply mean that knowledge about **our Lord Jesus Christ** will be revealed. Rather, he means that **our Lord Jesus Christ** himself will return to earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this phrase with a word such as “return” to make this idea clear. Alternate translation: “the return of our Lord Jesus Christ” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:8

### who

Here, **who** could refer to: (1) God, who is the implied subject of all the verbs in this section. “If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to end the previous sentence with a period.” If you use one of the following alternate translations, you may need to end the previous sentence with a period. Alternate translation: “It is God who” (2) Jesus, which is the closest name. Alternate translation: “It is Jesus who” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### will also confirm you

Here, **confirm** is the same word that Paul used in 1:6, also translated “confirmed.” Paul uses the word **also** to remind the reader that he has already used “confirmed.” If possible, translate **confirmed** as you did in 1:6. Just as there, here it refers to something or someone that is proved to be true or accurate. In this case, it means that God will make the Corinthians’ faith true **to the end**. Alternate translation: “will also establish your faith” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### to the end

The phrase translated **to the end** means that some activity or state will continue until a definable point in the future. Here it means that God will **confirm** the Corinthians until their earthly lives end. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this phrase with a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “until your race is run” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### blameless

Here, **blameless** gives the result of God confirming them to the end. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this connection explicit. Alternate translation: “so that you will be blameless” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:9

### by whom you were called

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **called** rather than the person doing the “calling.” Alternate translation: “who called you” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### into the fellowship of his Son

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **fellowship** that is with **his Son**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could: (1) use a word such as “with” to make this clear. Alternate translation: “into fellowship with his Son” (2) translate **fellowship** with a verb such as “share in” or “commune with.” Alternate translation: “to commune with his Son” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### of his Son

**Son** is an important title for Jesus and identifies his relationship with God the Father. (See: **Translating Son and Father (p.783)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:10

### Now I urge

Here, **Now** indicates the beginning of a new section. Paul transitions from giving thanks to appealing to the Corinthians to avoid divisions. You could: (1) leave this word untranslated and show the shift in topic by starting a new paragraph. Alternate translation: “I urge” (2) use a word or phrase that indicates the beginning of a new section. Alternate translation: “Next, I urge” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### Now I urge you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

In this sentence, the words **I urge you** are located far from what Paul is urging. If it would be helpful in your language, you could move **I urge you** so that it comes right before **that you all speak**. Alternate translation: “Now brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I urge you” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### brothers

Although **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “brothers and sisters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

Here Paul uses the **name** of Jesus to refer to the authority of Jesus. With this language, he reminds the Corinthians that he is an apostle with authority from Jesus. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of **name** with a comparable figure of speech or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “on behalf of our Lord Jesus Christ” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

### you all speak the same thing

In this language, to **speak the same thing** is an idiom that means that everyone is in agreement, not only in what they speak but also in what they believe and set as goals. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this phrase with a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “you all see eye to eye” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### divisions

Here, **divisions** refers to when one group splits into multiple different groups because they have different leaders, beliefs, or opinions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this word with a comparable noun or a short phrase that makes this clear. Alternate translation: “opposing parties” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### joined together

Here, **joined together** refers to putting something into its proper position or state, often returning it to that state. Here, then, it refers to restoring the community to the unity it had and is supposed to have. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the meaning of this word with a short phrase. Alternate translation: “restored to your previous unity” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## in the same mind and in the same purpose

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **mind** and **purpose**, you can express the ideas by using verbs such as “think” and “decide” or “choose.” Alternate translation: “by thinking the same things and by choosing the same things” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)



## 1 Corinthians 1:11

### For

Here, **For** introduces the reason why Paul is urging them to become united together. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **for** with a short phrase to express the idea. Alternate translation: "I speak this way because" (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### it was made clear to me concerning you, my brothers, by those of Chloe

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what was **made clear** rather than the people making it **clear**. Alternate translation: "those of Chloe have made it clear to me concerning you, my brothers," (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### my brothers

Although **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to both men or women. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: "my brothers and sisters" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### those of Chloe

Here, **those of Chloe** refers to people who are connected to Chloe and probably live in her house or work for her. Paul does not tell us whether they are family members, slaves, or employees. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this phrase with a word or phrase that indicates that these people are related to or dependent on Chloe. Alternate translation: "people connected to Chloe" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### of Chloe

**Chloe** is the name of a woman. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.699)**)

### there are factions among you

Here, **factions** refers to quarrels or strife among groups within a community. These quarrels or fights are not physical but verbal. If possible, use a word that refers to verbal conflict or express the idea with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "you have verbal fights with each other" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:12

### Now

Here, **Now** introduces a further explanation of what Paul started talking about in 1:11. If it would be helpful in your language, you could leave the word untranslated or use a word that introduces an explanation. Alternate translation: “Indeed,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### I say this

Here Paul uses the phrase **I say this** to explain what he meant in the previous verse when he mentioned “factions” (1:11). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this phrase with a comparable idiom for explaining what has already been said or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “what I mean is this” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### this, that

Having both **this** and **that** in this sentence may be redundant in your language. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a simpler way to introduce what Paul wants to **say**. Alternate translation: “that” (See: **Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit (p.726)**)

### each of you says

Here Paul uses **each of you** to emphasize that many individuals within the Corinthian congregation are saying these kinds of things. He does not mean that each person says all four of these things. He also does not mean that every single person in the church is making these kinds of claims. Finally, he does not mean that these are the only four claims that they are making. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the form that Paul uses with an expression that singles out many individuals within a group, and you could add a phrase that indicates that these are examples of what they are saying. Alternate translation: “people in your group are saying things like” (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

### I am of Paul,” or “I am of Apollos,” or “I am of Cephas,” or “I am of Christ

If you cannot use this quotation form in your language, you could translate these statements as indirect quotes instead of as direct quotes. Alternate translation: “that you are of Paul, or you are of Apollos, or you are of Cephas, or you are of Christ” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

### I am of Paul,” or “I am of Apollos,” or “I am of Cephas,” or “I am of Christ

Here Paul uses the possessive form to indicate that these people claim to be part of a specific leader’s group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form with a word such as “belong” or “follow.” Alternate translation: “I follow Paul,” or “I follow Apollos,” or “I follow Cephas,” or “I follow Christ.” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:13

### Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul

In this verse, Paul speaks of himself in the third person. This could sound like he is speaking about a different **Paul** than himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this use of **Paul** by clarifying that Paul is naming himself. Alternate translation: "I, Paul, was not crucified for you, was I? Or were you baptized in my name, Paul?" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.687)**)

### Has Christ been divided

Paul asks if **Christ** has **been divided**, but he is not really asking for information. Rather, the question assumes that the answer is "no," and Paul uses a question to invite the Corinthians to think about how absurd their behavior is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the meaning of this question with a strong negative statement. Alternate translation: "Christ has certainly not been divided!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### Has Christ been divided

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **divided** rather than whoever does the "dividing." If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: "Have they divided Christ?" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### Has Christ been divided

Here Paul speaks as if **Christ** could be **divided** into pieces and given to different groups. He speaks this way because he identifies the church with the body of Christ. If the church is divided into groups, then the body of Christ has been divided up as well. However, it is absurd to think that Christ's body has been cut up into pieces, so it is also absurd to divide the church into pieces. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this connection more explicit. Alternate translation: "Has Christ's own body been divided, just as your church has been divided?" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### Paul was not crucified for you, was he

Paul asks if **Paul was not crucified**, but he is not really asking for information. Rather, the question assumes that the answer is "no," and Paul uses a question to invite the Corinthians to think about how absurd their thinking is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negative statement. Alternate translation: "Paul was certainly not crucified for you!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### Paul was not crucified for you, was he

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the one who is **crucified** rather than whoever does the "crucifying." If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: "They did not crucify Paul for you, did they?" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## Or were you baptized in the name of Paul

Paul asks if they **were baptized in the name of Paul**, but he is not really asking for information. Rather, the question assumes that the answer is “no,” and Paul uses a question to invite the Corinthians to think about how absurd their thinking is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negative statement. Alternate translation: “You were certainly not baptized in the name of Paul!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## Or were you baptized in the name of Paul

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **baptized** rather than whoever does the “baptizing.” If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: “Or did they baptize you in the name of Paul?” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## in the name of Paul

Here Paul uses the word **name** to refer to authority. What he means is that, when they were baptized, no one used the **name of Paul**, and therefore they do not belong to his group. Instead, he implicitly asserts that they belong to God, whose name would have been used when they were baptized. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the meaning of this word by using the word “authority” or by a phrase that includes the language of “belonging.” Alternate translation: “under the authority of Paul” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:14

### I baptized none of you except

If it would appear in your language that Paul is making a statement here and then contradicting it, you could reword the sentence to avoid using an exception clause. Alternate translation: "I baptized only two of you." (See: **Connect — Exception Clauses (p.646)**)

### Crispus & Gaius

**Crispus** and **Gaius** are the names of two men. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.699)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:15

### so that

Here, **so that** introduces a purpose or result. In this case, it introduces what results from Paul not baptizing many of the Corinthians. Because he did not baptize almost any of them, they cannot say that they were baptized into his name. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection with a word that indicates result, and you could specify that it is the result of Paul not baptizing many of them. Alternate translation, as a new sentence: “The result is that” or “Therefore,” (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.650)**)

### you were baptized into my name

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **baptized** rather than whoever does the “baptizing.” If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: “someone baptized you into my name” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### into my name

Here, just as in [1:13](#), Paul uses the word **name** to refer to authority. What he means is that, when they were baptized, no one used Paul’s **name**, and therefore they do not belong to his group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the meaning of this word by using the word “authority” or by a phrase that includes the language of “belonging.” Alternate translation: “under my authority” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:16

### Now

Here, **Now** interrupts the argument and reintroduces the theme of 1:14, which is about whom Paul baptized. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this transition by using punctuation that indicates a brief aside or parenthesis, or you could use a phrase that introduces when someone remembers something. Alternate translation: “Speaking of baptizing, I remember that” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases** (p.662))

### of Stephanas

**Stephanas** is the name of a man. (See: **How to Translate Names** (p.699))

### I do not know if I baptized any others

This statement expresses more or less confidence about how many people Paul **baptized**. It could mean that Paul is: (1) relatively confident that he has thought of everyone he baptized. Alternate translation: “I think that this is everyone that I baptized” (2) less confident that he has thought of everyone he baptized. Alternate translation: “I do not remember if I baptized any others” (See: **Translate Unknowns** (p.780))

### if

Paul here uses the condition introduced by **if** because he wishes to acknowledge that he thinks he has mentioned everyone that he baptized, but he is not sure. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this word with a word that expresses uncertainty. Alternate translation: “whether” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions** (p.653))

## 1 Corinthians 1:17

### For

Here, **For** introduces an explanation for why Paul has baptized so few people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection with a word that introduces an explanation, and you could clarify that it explains how little he baptizes. Alternate translation: “I only baptized a few people, because” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### Christ did not send me to baptize, but to proclaim the gospel

If your language would not naturally put the negative statement before the positive statement, you could reverse them and introduce **not with wise speech** by repeating **proclaim**. Alternate translation: “Christ sent me to proclaim the gospel, not to baptize. I proclaim the gospel” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### but to proclaim the gospel

In this clause, Paul has omitted some words that might be necessary to make a complete thought in your language. If you do need these words in your language, you could repeat the “sending” language. Alternate translation: “but he sent me to proclaim the gospel” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### not with wise speech

In this clause, Paul has omitted some words that might be necessary to make a complete thought in your language. If you do need these words in your language, you could repeat the “proclaiming” language. Alternate translation: “I do not proclaim it with wise speech” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### so that

Here, **so that** introduces the purpose for which Paul does not use “wise speech.” Here, you could use a word or phrase that normally indicates purpose. Alternate translation: “in order that” (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.650)**)

### the cross of Christ would not be emptied

Here Paul speaks as if the **cross of Christ** were a container that was full of power and which he does not wish to empty of that power. By this, he means that he does not want to take away the power that the cross and the message about it have. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this phrase with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly, including the idea of power. Alternate translation: “the cross of Christ would not lose its power” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### the cross of Christ would not be emptied

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the **cross** that could be **emptied** rather than the person doing the “emptying.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that he himself would do it. Alternate translation: “I would not empty the cross of Christ” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)



## 1 Corinthians 1:18

**For**

### Connecting Statement:

Here, **For** introduces an explanation of the last part of 1:17. In this verse, then, Paul explains further why he does not use wise speech. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection with words that introduce an explanation, and you could briefly restate what Paul is explaining. Alternate translation: “I speak in this way because” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### the word of the cross

Here Paul uses the possessive form to speak about a **word** or a teaching that is about **the cross**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by clarifying that the **cross** is the content of the **word**. Alternate translation: “the word about the cross” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### of the cross

Here, the word **cross** stands for the event in which Jesus died on the cross. If it would be helpful in your language, you could include Jesus’ death in your translation. Alternate translation: “of Jesus’s death on the cross” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

### is foolishness

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **foolishness**, you could express the idea by using an adjective such as “foolish.” Alternate translation: “seems foolish” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### to the ones perishing

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **the ones perishing** rather than focusing on the person who makes them “perish.” If you must state who does the action, Paul could imply that: (1) they cause or experience the action. Alternate translation: “to those who will experience destruction” (2) God does the action. Alternate translation: “to those whom God will destroy” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### but to us, the ones being saved

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **the ones being saved** rather than the person doing the “saving.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “but to us whom God is saving” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### but to us, the ones being saved

The description **the ones being saved** distinguishes **us** from everyone else. It is not just adding information. Use a form in your language that shows that this is a distinguishing phrase. Alternate translation: “but to us, that is, the ones who are being saved” (See: **Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding (p.670)**)

## it is the power of God

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **power** that comes from **God**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by clarifying that **God** is the source of the **power**. Alternate translation: “power from God” or “God working in power” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

# 1 Corinthians 1:19

## For

Here, **For** introduces Paul's evidence that what he said in 1:18 is true. You could use a word that introduces evidence for a claim or leave the word untranslated. Alternate translation: "As" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases** (p.662))

## it is written

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what **is written** rather than the person doing the "writing." If you must state who does the action, you can express it so that: (1) the scripture or scripture author writes or speaks the words. Alternate translation: "Isaiah has written" (2) God speaks the words. Alternate translation: "God has said" (See: **Active or Passive** (p.621))

## For it is written

In Paul's culture, **For it is written** was a normal way to introduce a quotation from an important text. In this case, the quotation comes from [Isaiah 29:14](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express how Paul introduces the quotation with a comparable phrase that indicates that Paul is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: "For it can be read in Isaiah" or "For it says in the book of Isaiah" (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins** (p.761))

## I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will frustrate the understanding of the intelligent

If you cannot use this form in your language, you could translate this direct quote as an indirect quote, specifying that God is the subject and including an introductory word such as "that." Alternate translation: "that God will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and he will frustrate the understanding of the intelligent" (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations** (p.668))

## the wisdom of the wise, & the understanding of the intelligent

In both of these clauses, Paul uses the possessive form to describe **wisdom** or **understanding** that belongs to **the wise** or **the intelligent**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate that **wisdom** and **understanding** belong to **the wise** or **the intelligent**. Alternate translation: "the wisdom that the wise have ... the understanding that the intelligent have" (See: **Possession** (p.750))

## of the wise, & of the intelligent

Paul is using the adjectives **wise** and **intelligent** as nouns in order to describe groups of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate these with noun phrases. Alternate translation: "of the people who are wise ... of the people who are intelligent" (See: **Nominal Adjectives** (p.738))

## of the intelligent

Here, **intelligent** describes someone who is good at figuring out problems, understanding new ideas, and making smart decisions. Use a word in your language that gets this general idea across. Alternate translation: "of the smart" or "of the clever" (See: **Translate Unknowns** (p.780))

## 1 Corinthians 1:20

### Where {is} the wise person? Where {is} the scholar? Where {is} the debater of this age

With these questions, Paul is not actually asking about the location of certain people. Rather, he is suggesting to the Corinthians that these kinds of people cannot be found. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind these questions with statements that: (1) assert that these people do not actually have real wisdom, knowledge, or skill. Alternate translation: "The wise person does not really have wisdom. The scholar does not really know much. The debater of this age is not really good at arguing" (2) assert that these people do not exist. Alternate translation: "There is no wise person. There is no scholar. There is no debater of this age" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### the wise person? & the scholar? & the debater

Paul uses these singular nouns to identify types of people, but he does not mean just one **wise person**, **scholar**, or **debater**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that identifies a type of person, or you could translate these nouns in plural form. Alternate translation: "the kind of person who has wisdom ... the kind of person who is a scholar ... the kind of person who is a debater" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### the debater of this age

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe a **debater** who is part of **this age**. In fact, Paul may mean that the **wise person** and the **scholar** also belong to **this age**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form with a relative clause. Alternate translation: "the debater, who belongs in this age" or "the debater? All these kinds of people belong to this age" (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### the debater

Here, **debater** refers to a person who spends much of their time arguing about beliefs, values, or actions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this word with a short phrase or a term that expresses this idea better. Alternate translation: "the disputant" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### Has not God turned the wisdom of the world into foolishness

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is "yes." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a statement. Alternate translation: "God has turned the wisdom of the world into foolishness" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### the wisdom of the world

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **wisdom** that seems wise according to the standard of this **world**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form using a relative clause. Alternate translation: "the wisdom that this world values" (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

# 1 Corinthians 1:21

## For

Here, **For** introduces an explanation of how God has turned the wisdom of the world into foolishness (1:20). You could use a word that introduces an explanation in your language or a short phrase that identifies that this verse explains the previous verse. Alternate translation: “That is,” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

## since & the world did not know God through wisdom, God was pleased

Here, **since** introduces the reason for the second half of the verse, which , begins with **God was pleased**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this more explicit or break the two pieces into two sentences and use a transition word that indicates result. Alternate translation: “because ... the world did not know God through wisdom, therefore God was pleased” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

## in the wisdom of God

Here Paul uses the possessive form to speak of **wisdom** that **God** uses when he makes decisions or acts. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form by adding “plans” or “thinking” and translating **wisdom** with an adjective such as “wise.” Alternate translation: “in God’s wise plan” or “in God’s wise thinking” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## the world

Here Paul uses **the world** to refer to the humans that are part of the **the world**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this word by translating **the world** with a word or phrase that refers to people who do not believe in Christ, or you could use a phrase like “people of the world.” Alternate translation: “the people of the world” (See: **Synecdoche (p.773)**)

## the foolishness of the preaching

Here Paul uses the possessive form to speak of **preaching** that is characterized by **foolishness**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form by translating **foolishness** as an adjective describing **the preaching** or the content of **the preaching**. Alternate translation: “the foolish preaching” or “the foolish message that we preach” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## the foolishness

Paul describes the **preaching** as **foolishness**. He does not actually think his message is foolish. Instead, he speaks from the perspective of **the world** and its **wisdom**, because the message is foolish to **the world**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this way of speaking with an expression that indicates that Paul is using irony or speaking from another person’s perspective. Alternate translation: “the so-called foolishness” (See: **Irony (p.719)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:22

### For indeed, Jews

Here, **For** sets up the contrast between this verse and what Paul says in the next verse. If your language has a way to begin a contrast, you could use it here. Otherwise, you could leave the word untranslated. Alternate translation: “It is indeed true that Jews” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### Jews & Greeks

By using the words translated **Jews** and **Greeks**, Paul is not saying that every single Jewish and Greek person does these things. Instead, he is generalizing, identifying common patterns among people who are Jewish and Greek. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by clarifying that not all **Jews** and **Greeks** are meant. Alternate translation: “most Jews ... most Greeks” (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

### Greeks

Here, **Greeks** does not refer only to people who are ethnically Greek. However, it also does not refer to everyone who is not a Jew. Rather, it refers to people who speak the Greek language and who value the philosophy and education that are part of Greek culture. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this word with a word or phrase that identifies these people by their interests and values more than by their ethnicity. Alternate translation: “people who value Greek philosophy” or “people who had a Greek education” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:23

### But

Here Paul uses **But** to continue the contrast he set up in 1:22. Jews seek signs, and Greeks seek wisdom, but Paul and those like him proclaim that the Messiah was crucified. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection with a word or phrase that indicates a strong contrast between behavior or beliefs. Alternate translation: “In contrast with them,” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### we

Here, **we** refers to Paul and others who proclaim the gospel with him. It does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.685)**)

### Christ crucified

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **Christ** who was **crucified** rather than the person doing the “crucifying.” If you must state who does the action, you can express the idea with: (1) **Christ** as the subject. Alternate translation: “that Christ laid down his life on the cross” (2) an indefinite or vague subject. Alternate translation: “that they crucified Christ” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### a stumbling block

Paul uses **stumbling block** to indicate that the message about “Christ crucified” causes offense or repulses many Jews. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this word with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “a repulsive concept” or “an unacceptable idea” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### to Jews & to Gentiles

By using the words translated **Jews** and **Gentiles**, Paul is not saying that every single Jewish and Gentile person responds to the gospel in these ways. Instead, he is generalizing, identifying common patterns among people who are Jewish and Gentile. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by clarifying that not all **Jews** and **Gentiles** are meant. Alternate translation: “to most Jews ... to most Gentiles” (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:24

### But

Here Paul uses **But** to contrast **the called** and the “Jews” and “Gentiles” in 1:23. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection with a word or phrase that contrasts people and their thinking. Alternate translation: “In contrast with them,” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### to them, the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ {is} the power of God and the wisdom of God

Paul here puts the people he is talking about first before he makes a statement about them. If this is unnatural in your language, you could: (1) phrase the sentence so that **the called** is the subject of the whole sentence. Alternate translation: “those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, know that Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God” (2) move **to the called** to the end of the sentence. Alternate translation: “Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### to them, the called

Paul uses the third person to speak about those whom God has called, because he is speaking of the group as a category in comparison with Jews who find the gospel a stumbling block and Gentiles who find the gospel to be foolish. He does not use the third person because he excludes himself or the Corinthians from this category. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form with the first person. Alternate translation: “to those of us who are called” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.687)**)

### the called

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **called** rather than the person doing the “calling.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “whom God has called” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### Greeks

Here, **Greeks** does not refer only to people who are ethnically Greek. However, it also does not refer to everyone who is not a Jew. Rather, it refers to people who speak the Greek language and who value the philosophy and education that are part of Greek culture. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this word with a word or phrase that identifies these people by their interests and values more than by their ethnicity. Alternate translation: “people who value Greek philosophy” or “people who had a Greek education” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### Christ

Here, the word **Christ** could refer to: (1) the message about the work of Christ. Alternate translation: “the message about Christ” (2) the work of Christ, especially his death. Alternate translation: “Christ’s work” or “Christ’s death” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)



## is} the power of God

Here Paul uses the possessive form to speak of **power** that comes from **God**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by clarifying that **God** is the source of the **power**. Alternate translation: “power from God” or “God acting powerfully” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## the wisdom of God

Here Paul uses the possessive form to speak of **wisdom** that comes from **God**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by clarifying that **God** is the source of the **wisdom**. Alternate translation: “wisdom from God” or “God giving wisdom” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:25

### For

Here, **For** introduces the reason why the seemingly foolish message about Christ is power and wisdom (1:24). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection with a word that introduces a reason or a short phrase that connects this verse to the previous verse or verses. Alternate translation: “God works through foolishness because” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### the foolishness of God & the weakness of God

Paul describes God as having **foolishness** and **weakness**. He does not actually think that God is weak and foolish, but he is speaking of them from the perspective of the world and its wisdom. From the perspective of the world, Paul's God is indeed foolish and weak. What Paul means to say is that what the world sees as **foolishness** and **weakness** is still **wiser** and **stronger** than anything that humans have to offer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this way of speaking with an expression that indicates that Paul is using irony or speaking from another person's perspective. Alternate translation: “the apparent foolishness of God ... the apparent weakness of God” (See: **Irony (p.719)**)

### men, & men

The words translated **men** in both places in this verse do not refer just to male people. Rather, Paul means any human of any sex. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **men** to refer to both genders or use a gender-neutral word. Alternate translation: “women and men ... women and men” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### the foolishness of God is

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **foolishness** that comes from **God**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form with a phrase that indicates that **God** does **foolishness**. Alternate translation: “the foolish things that God does are” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### is wiser than men

Paul does not include all the words that are needed in many languages to make a complete comparison. If you do need these words in your language, you could add whatever is needed to make the comparison complete, such as “the wisdom.” Alternate translation: “is wiser than the wisdom of men” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### the weakness of God

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **weakness** that comes from **God**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by translating this idea with a phrase that indicates that **God** does **weakness**. Alternate translation: “the weak things that God does are” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### is} stronger than men

Paul does not include all the words that are needed in many languages to make a complete comparison. If you do need these words in your language, you could add whatever is needed to make the comparison complete, such as “the strength.” Alternate translation: “stronger than the strength of men” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

# 1 Corinthians 1:26

## For

Here, **For** introduces proof for or examples of what Paul has claimed so far about God choosing to work through foolishness and weakness. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection with a word or phrase that introduces examples or support. Alternate translation: “For instance,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

## your calling

Here, **calling** refers primarily to who the Corinthians were at the time of their **calling**. It does not primarily refer to God’s act in **calling** them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could emphasize this aspect in your translation. Alternate translation: “who you were at your calling” (See: **Synecdoche (p.773)**)

## brothers

Here, **brothers** does not just refer to men but to people of any sex. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “brothers and sisters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## not many {& not many {& and} not many

Here Paul uses a form that can more easily be stated in inverse form in many languages. If: (1) your language would most naturally put **not** with the verb instead of **many**, you could do so here. Alternate translation: “many were not ... many were not ... and many were not” (2) your language would most naturally use a word that indicates a small number of people here, you could use it without **not**. Alternate translation: “few ... few ... and few” (See: **Litotes (p.724)**)

## not many {& not many {& and} not many

While Paul does not explicitly state that **not many** refers to the Corinthians, he is referring to the Corinthians when he says **not many**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could insert “you.” Alternate translation: “not many of you ... not many of you ... and not many of you” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## not many {were} wise according to the flesh, not many {were} powerful, {and} not many {were} of noble birth

Paul here uses the phrase **according to the flesh** to clarify what he means by **wise**, and also **powerful**, and also **of noble birth**, not just **wise**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could move the phrase **according to the flesh** so that it is clear that it modifies all three of these statements. Alternate translation: “according to the flesh, not many were wise, not many were powerful, and not many were of noble birth” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

## according to the flesh

Here Paul uses the phrase **according to the flesh** to refer to human ways of thinking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this phrase by stating the idiom **according to the flesh** with a phrase that refers to human values or perspectives. Alternate translation: “according to human definitions” or “according to what humans value” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:27

### But

Here Paul uses **But** to introduce a contrast. He is contrasting **God chose the foolish things** with what a person might expect about how God would treat foolish and weak people like the Corinthians. He is not contrasting how **God chose the foolish things** with the statements in the previous verse about the foolishness and weakness of the Corinthians. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this contrast by clarifying that Paul writes **But** to contrast this statement with what a person might expect about God. Alternate translation: “Despite what might be expected,” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### God chose the foolish things of the world in order that he might shame the wise, and God chose the weak things of the world in order that he might shame the strong

Here Paul makes two very similar statements in which **foolish** goes with **weak** and **wise** goes with **strong**. These two statements are almost synonymous, and Paul repeats himself to emphasize the point. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine the two sentences into one. Alternate translation: “God chose the unimportant things of the world in order that he might shame the important things” or “God chose the foolish and weak things of the world in order that he might shame the wise and strong” (See: **Parallelism (p.745)**)

### the foolish things of the world & the weak things of the world

Paul uses the possessive form twice to clarify that the **foolish things** and **weak things** are only **foolish** and **weak** from the perspective of the **world**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form with a phrase such as “according to the world.” Alternate translation: “things that are foolish according to the world ... things that are weak according to the world” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### of the world & of the world

When Paul uses **the world** in this context, he is not referring primarily to everything that God has made. Rather, he uses **the world** to refer to human beings. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the world** with an expression that refers to human beings in general. Alternate translation: “of people ... of people” (See: **Synecdoche (p.773)**)

### in order that & in order that

Here, **in order that** could introduce: (1) the purpose for which **God chose the foolish things of the world and the weak things of the world**. Alternate translation: “so that ... so that” (2) what happened when **God chose the foolish things of the world and the weak things of the world**. Alternate translation: “with the result that ... with the result that” (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.650)**)

### the wise, & the strong

Paul uses the adjective **wise** to describe a group of people, and he uses the adjective **strong** to describe a group of people and things. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate these two adjectives with noun phrases. Alternate translation: “people who are wise ... people and things which are strong” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:28

### God chose & of the world, {& in order that

In this verse, Paul repeats many of the words from the parallel parts of the previous verse. He does this because, in his culture, repeating the same idea with different examples was more convincing than using just one example. If possible, translate these words the same way that you translated them in 1:27. You could remove or change some of the words if it makes the sentence sound more convincing. Alternate translation: “he chose ... of the world ... in order that” (See: **Parallelism (p.745)**)

### the base things

Here, **base things** is the opposite of the word translated “of noble birth” in 1:26. Paul uses it to refer to things and people that were not considered important or powerful in his culture. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **base things** with a word or phrase that refers to people and things that have low status or low importance. Alternate translation: “the marginalized things” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### the despised things

While **base things** refers to a person’s status or a thing’s status, the word translated **despised things** refers to how people treat other people or things that have low status. Usually, people badly treat others whom they consider to be of lower status, ignoring them or mocking them. That is what Paul means when he says **despised**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **despised things** with a word or phrase that refers to how people mistreat others of lower status. Alternate translation: “the scorned things” or “the things people treat with contempt” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### the base things and the despised things of the world

Here Paul uses **of the world** to describe both **the base things** and **the despised things**. As in 1:27, he uses the possessive form to clarify that **base things and the despised things** are only **base** and **despised** from the perspective of the world. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **of the world** with a phrase such as “according to the world.” Alternate translation: “the base things and the despised things according to the world” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### of the world

When Paul uses **the world** in this context, he is not referring primarily to everything that God has made. Rather, he uses **the world** to refer to human beings. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the world** with an expression that refers to human beings in general. Alternate translation: “of people” (See: **Synecdoche (p.773)**)

### and} the {things that} are not

Here Paul further describes the **base things** and **the despised things** as if they were **{things that} are not**. He does not mean that the **base** and **despised things** do not exist. Instead, he is identifying how people often ignore the **base** and **despised things**, just as if they did not exist at all. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the {things that} are not** with a comparable phrase or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “the things that people ignore” (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

## in order that

Here, **in order that** could introduce: (1) the purpose for which **God chose the base things and the despised things of the world, the things that are not**. Alternate translation: “so that” (2) what happened when **God chose the base things and the despised things of the world, the things that are not**. Alternate translation: “with the result that” (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.650)**)

## he might bring to nothing

Here, **he might bring to nothing** refers to making something ineffective, useless, or irrelevant. What Paul means is that God has made **the things that are** unimportant and without function because he instead worked through **the things that are not**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **bring to nothing** with a word or phrase that indicates that a person has acted so that something else is no longer important, useful, or effective. Alternate translation: “he might tear down” or “render ineffective” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## the {things that} are

In this context, **the {things that} are** does not refer primarily to things that exist. Rather, it refers primarily to things that are important in society and culture. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the {things that} are** with a comparable phrase that refers to important or significant things and people in your culture. Alternate translation: “the things that people care about” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:29

### so that

Here, **so that** introduces a final goal. In 1:28–29, Paul uses “in order that” to introduce immediate goals, but here, **so that** is the overall goal. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **so that** with a word or phrase that introduces a final or overall goal, making sure to distinguish it from the words you used in 1:28–29, if possible. Alternate translation: “so that, in the end,” (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.650)**)

### no flesh

Paul uses the word **flesh** to refer to humans. Unlike in many other places in his letters, **flesh** does not indicate sinful and weak humanity. Instead, it simply refers to humans compared to their creator, God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **flesh** with a word or phrase that commonly refers to people in general, especially if it includes the idea that people are created by God. Alternate translation: “no creature” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### before God

Here Paul speaks of people not boasting **before God**, as if they were standing in front of **God**. With this way of talking, Paul means that people are acting as if they could see God and God could see them. This means that they recognize that God knows what they say and do. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable phrase that indicates that someone recognizes that God knows what they are doing and thinking. Alternate translation: “when they know that God sees them” or “while God looks on” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:30

### But

Here, **But** introduces a slight contrast between people who might boast and the Corinthians who are united to Christ. However, **But** primarily means that Paul is moving to the next step in his argument. If **But** would not express this idea in your language, you could use a word that indicates that the author is moving on to the next step, or you could leave it untranslated. Alternate translation: “Now” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### because of him, you are in Christ Jesus

While **because of him, you are in Christ Jesus** is not written the way most passive sentences are, this construction is like a passive sentence and may be difficult to represent in your language. What **because of him** means is that God is the source of how the Corinthians **are in Christ Jesus**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could rephrase these words so that “God” is the subject who makes it so that **you are in Christ Jesus**. Alternate translation: “he puts you in Christ Jesus” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### of him

Here, **of him** refers to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express to whom **him** refers with the name “God” here. Alternate translation: “of God” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### in Christ Jesus

Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in Christ Jesus** to describe the union of believers with Christ. In this case, being **in Christ Jesus**, or united to Christ Jesus, explains how **Christ Jesus** can be **wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption** for the Corinthians. Alternate translation: “in union with Christ Jesus” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### who was made for us wisdom from God, righteousness, and also sanctification and redemption

Here Paul uses language and structure that is very similar to what he used in 1:24. Refer back to that verse to help you translate this verse. When Paul says that Jesus **was made for us wisdom and righteousness, and also sanctification and redemption**, he does not mean that Jesus has become these abstract ideas. Instead, he means that Jesus is the source of **wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption** for **us** who are **in Christ Jesus**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could include some clarifying words such as “the source of.” Alternate translation: “who was made for us the source of wisdom from God, the source of righteousness, and also the source of sanctification and redemption” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### who was made for us wisdom from God

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **Christ Jesus**, who was **made for us wisdom**, rather than focusing on the person “making” him wisdom. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “whom God made for us wisdom from himself” or “whom God made to be wisdom for us” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)



## who

Here, **who** refers to **Christ Jesus**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the name of **Christ Jesus** instead of using **who** or along with **who**. Alternate translation: “the Christ who” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## wisdom from God, righteousness, and also sanctification and redemption

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **wisdom**, **righteousness**, **sanctification**, and **redemption**, you can express the ideas by using verbs with God as the subject. Alternate translation: “a person through whom God taught us, judged us not guilty, and also set us apart for himself and set us free” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 1:31

### so that

Here, **so that** could introduce: (1) the result of everything he has said about God being the one who chooses and acts. If you use one of the following alternate translation, you may need to add a period before it. Alternate translation: "Because of all this" or "Therefore" (2) the purpose for which God chose the weak and foolish. Alternate translation: "in order that" (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### so that, just as it is written

Here Paul leaves out some words that might be required in your language to make a complete thought. If your language does need these words, you could supply words such as "we should do." Alternate translation: "so that we should behave just as it is written" (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### just as it is written, "Let the one boasting, boast in the Lord

If it would be unnatural in your language to put **just as it is written** before the quotation, you could put **just as it is written** at the end of the sentence. Alternate translation: "'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord,' just as it is written" (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### just as it is written

In Paul's culture, **just as it is written** is a normal way to introduce a quotation from an important text, in this case, the Old Testament book written by Jeremiah the prophet (See: [Jeremiah 9:24](#)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a comparable phrase that indicates that Paul is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: "as it can be read in the Old Testament" or "according to Jeremiah the prophet" (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

### it is written

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what **is written** rather than the person doing the "writing." If you must state who does the action, you can express it so that: (1) the scripture or scripture author writes or speaks the words. Alternate translation: "Jeremiah has written" (2) God speaks the words. Alternate translation: "God has said" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### Let the one boasting, boast in the Lord

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could: (1) translate this one as a conditional sentence, adding "if." Alternate translation: "If people want to boast, they should boast in the Lord" (2) translate this one using a word such as "should." Alternate translation: "Anyone who boasts should boast in the Lord" (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### Let & boast in the Lord

When Paul says that someone can **boast in the Lord**, he does not mean that they are inside **the Lord**. Rather, he means that they are boasting about **the Lord** and what he has done. If it would be helpful in your language, you

could express **boast in the Lord** with a comparable phrase that indicates that someone is boasting about someone else. Alternate translation: "Let ... boast with reference to the Lord" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

# 1 Corinthians 2

## 1 Corinthians 2 General Notes

### Structure and Formatting

Against divisions (1:10–4:15)

- Paul's attitude among the Corinthians (2:1–5)
- The wisdom of God, revealed by the Spirit (2:6–16)

Some translations set each line of poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to make it easier to read. The ULT does this with the words of verses 9 and 16, which are from the Old Testament. Verse 9 quotes from Isaiah 64:4, and verse 16 quotes from Isaiah 40.

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

#### Wisdom and foolishness

Throughout this chapter, Paul continues to speak of both wisdom and foolishness. Just as in chapter one, these words do not refer primarily to how much or how little education someone has. Rather, they refer to how well or how poorly someone plans actions and knows how the world works. Continue to use the words you chose in chapter one. (See: [\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/wise\]\]](#) and [\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/foolish\]\]](#))

#### Power and weakness

Throughout this chapter, Paul continues to speak of both power and weakness. Just as in chapter one, these words primarily refer to how much influence and authority a person has and to how much they can accomplish. Someone who has “power” has much influence and authority and can accomplish many things. Someone who has “weakness” does not have much influence and authority and is not able to accomplish many things. Continue to use the words that you chose in chapter one. (See: [\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/power\]\]](#))

#### The Spirit

Paul first mentions the “Spirit” in this chapter. In most places where this word appears, it refers to God's Spirit (the Holy Spirit), who is the third person of the Trinity. However, in two places in this chapter, the word “spirit” refers to something else. First, “spirit of the world” in [2:12](#) refers to a “spirit” that is not God's Spirit and that originates from within the world. Paul says that this kind of “spirit” is not the kind that believers in Jesus have received. Second, the “spirit of a man” in [2:11](#) refers to the nonphysical part of a person. It does not refer to God's Spirit or to something that God's Spirit replaces. Sometimes Paul uses the adjective form “spiritual” ([2:13](#); [2:15](#)) and the adverb form “spiritually” ([2:14](#)). Both of these forms also refer to God's Spirit. If someone or something is “spiritual,” that means that the person or thing has or is characterized by God's Spirit. If something is done “spiritually,” that means that it is done by the power of God's Spirit. Once, Paul uses the word “natural” ([2:14](#)), which is the opposite of “spiritual.” “Natural” means that the person or thing does not have and is not characterized by God's Spirit. (See: **Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit** (p.797))

#### The Mystery

Paul speaks of a “mystery” in [2:1](#); [2:7](#). This “mystery” is not some secret truth that is hard to understand and that only a few privileged individuals can learn about. Instead, it refers to God's plans that once were unknown but are

now known to all his people. As Paul has already stated in chapter one, these plans center around the cross, which seems to be foolishness. (See: [\[\[rc://\\*/tw/dict/bible/kt/reveal\]\]](#))

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### The deep things of God

In [2:10](#), Paul says that the Spirit searches “the deep things of God.” Paul talks about God as if he were a well or a lake with parts that are deep down in order to identify things about God that humans cannot understand or find it difficult to understand. He does not mean that God is a being or location with deep parts. See the note on this verse for translation options.

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### The rulers of this age

In [2:6](#); [2:8](#), Paul speaks about “the rulers of this age.” This phrase refers to individuals who have power in the created world during the time between Christ’s first and second comings. While Paul does not state whether these individuals with power are humans or spiritual beings, he does say that they were the ones who crucified Jesus ([2:8](#)). This suggests that they are humans, and they would be people like governors, emperors, and unfaithful religious leaders. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/other/ruler\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/other/age\]\]](#))

### Positive and negative uses of “wisdom”

Just as in chapter one, Paul continues to speak about wisdom in both positive and negative ways. He uses the same words throughout the chapter, and he distinguishes between positive and negative meanings by connecting the words to different people or ideas. For example, he speaks of wisdom negatively when it is the wisdom of the world, or the wisdom of humans. However, he speaks of wisdom positively when it is wisdom from God or wisdom given by God. If possible, translate the negative and positive meanings of wisdom with the same word, just as Paul uses one word for both negative and positive. If you must use different words, use positive words for God’s wisdom and negative words for human wisdom.

### First-person singular and plural

Paul uses the first-person singular in [2:1–5](#) because in these verses he speaks of his own time among the Corinthians. He switches to the first-person plural in [2:6–16](#) because in these verses he is speaking more generally about everyone who proclaims the Gospel as he does. In [2:6–16](#), the first-person plural sometimes includes the Corinthians and sometimes does not include the Corinthians. Throughout the chapter, the first-person plural will include the Corinthians unless a note specifies that it does not include them. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’** (p. 685))

## 1 Corinthians 2:1

### And I

Here, **And I** introduces how Paul himself fits into the pattern he introduced in the last chapter. Just as God chooses the weak and the foolish, Paul preaches the gospel in weak and foolish ways. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this connection with a word or phrase that introduces an example or a comparison. Alternate translation: "In the same way, I" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### brothers

Although **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to both men or women. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: "brothers and sisters" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### having come to you, did not come

Here Paul twice says that he has **come** to them. This is a structure that makes sense in Paul's language. However, If it would be helpful in your language, you could: (1) translate the first **come** with a different word, such as "visit." Alternate translation: "having visited you, did not come" (2) combine these two phrases. Alternate translation: "did not come to you" (See: **Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit (p.726)**)

### having come to you

The phrase **having come to you** gives background information. It describes what happened before Paul **did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection by clarifying by using a word that introduces action that has already occurred. Alternate translation: "after I came to you" or "when I came to you" (See: **Connect — Background Information (p.638)**)

### having come to you, did not come

Here Paul is speaking about how he had previously visited the Corinthians. Use a form in your language that refers to a past visit. Alternate translation: "after arriving where you live, did not arrive" (See: **Go and Come (p.694)**)

### superiority of speech or of wisdom

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **speech** and **wisdom** that have **superiority**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the meaning of this form by translating **superiority** as an adjective. Alternate translation: "superior speech or superior wisdom" (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### superiority of speech or of wisdom

Here, **superiority** refers to how something or someone has more authority, skill, knowledge, or power than something or someone else. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the meaning of this word with a comparable word or a short description. Alternate translation: "greatness of speech or of wisdom" or "speech or wisdom that was better than what others have" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## of wisdom, proclaiming to you the mystery of God

The phrase **proclaiming to you the mystery of God** gives the situation in which Paul **did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make it explicit by including a word that indicates that these things are happening at the same time. Alternate translation: “or wisdom when I proclaimed to you the mystery of God” (See: **Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship (p.660)**)

## the mystery of God

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe a **mystery** that is: (1) revealed by God. Alternate translation: “the mystery given by God” or “the mystery from God” (2) about God. Alternate translation: “the mystery about God” or “the mystery concerning God” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## mystery

In Paul’s language, **mystery** and “testimony” look and sound very similar. While some early and important manuscripts have “testimony” here, other early and important manuscripts have **mystery**. Unless there is a good reason to translate “testimony,” it is best to follow the ULT here. (See: **Textual Variants (p.775)**)

## 1 Corinthians 2:2

### I decided not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ

Here Paul speaks as if he decides to forget all his knowledge and become ignorant of everything except **Jesus Christ**. This is an exaggeration that the Corinthians would have understood as emphasis on Paul's sharp focus on **Jesus Christ** as the one thing he wished to tell the Corinthians about. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this exaggeration with a phrase that indicates that it is an exaggeration or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "I decided to speak among you only about Jesus Christ" (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

### I decided not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified

If it would appear in your language that Paul makes a strong statement about knowing nothing and then contradicts it, you could reword this sentence so that there is no **except**. Alternate translation: "I decided that among you I would only know Jesus Christ and him crucified" (See: **Connect — Exception Clauses (p.646)**)

### him crucified

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **Jesus Christ** who was **crucified** rather than the person doing the "crucifying." If you must state who does the action, you can express the idea with: (1) **Christ** as the subject. Alternate translation: "how he laid down his life on the cross" (2) an indefinite or vague subject. Alternate translation: "how they crucified him" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)



## 1 Corinthians 2:3

### And I

Here, **And I** is the same word Paul used to introduce 2:1. It again introduces how Paul himself fits into the pattern he introduced in the last chapter. Just as God chooses the weak and the foolish, Paul himself was weak and foolish. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this connection with a word or phrase that introduces an example or a comparison. Alternate translation: “Just as I did not use superior words and wisdom, I myself” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### And I was with you

Alternate translation: “And I remained with you”

### in weakness and in fear and in much trembling

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **weakness**, **fear**, and **trembling**, you can express the ideas by using adjectives or verbs. Alternate translation: “as a weak, fearful, and frequently trembling person” or “while I ailed, feared, and often trembled” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 2:4

### my word and my proclamation {were} not with persuasive words of wisdom

Here Paul does not use the verb **{were}** in his sentence. In English, this word is essential, so it has been included in the ULT. If you can translate this sentence without **{were}**, you could do so here. Otherwise, you could retain **{were}** as it appears in the ULT. (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### my word and my proclamation {were} not

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **word** and **proclamation**, you can express the ideas by using verbs such as “speak” or “talk” and “proclaim.” Alternate translation: “I spoke and proclaimed a message not” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### with persuasive words of wisdom

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **words** and **wisdom**, you can express the ideas by using a verb such as “speak” or “talk” and an adverb such as “wisely.” Alternate translation: “based on speaking persuasively and wisely” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### persuasive words of wisdom

Here Paul uses the possessive form to identify the **words** as containing **wisdom**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form by translating **wisdom** with an adjective such as “wise.” Alternate translation: “wise, persuasive words” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power

Here Paul has omitted some words that may be necessary to make a complete thought in your language. If your language needs these words, you could add them here, supplying the idea from earlier in the verse. Alternate translation: “but my word and my proclamation were with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **demonstration** and **power**, you can express the ideas by using a verb such as “demonstrate” or “show” and an adverb such as “powerfully.” Alternate translation: “based on demonstrating the Spirit and how he works powerfully” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### a demonstration of the Spirit and of power

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe a **demonstration** that: (1) comes from **the Spirit** and **power**. Alternate translation: “a demonstration by the Spirit and by power” (2) proves that the **Spirit** and **power** are present. Alternate translation: “a demonstration of the presence of the Spirit and of power” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## a demonstration

Here, **demonstration** refers to proving or showing that something is true. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this word with a comparable expression. Alternate translation: “a validation” or “a confirmation” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## of the Spirit and of power

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **Spirit** tells who is acting in **power**. 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: “of the Spirit’s power” (See: **Hendiadys (p.696)**)

## 1 Corinthians 2:5

### your faith might not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God

Here, when someone has **faith** that is **in** something, the word **in** signals what the **faith** is based on. Unlike in many other cases, **in** does not introduce what it is that people trust. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this phrase by translating **in** with a word or phrase that indicates the basis of the **faith**. Alternate translation: “your faith might not be based on the wisdom of men but be based on the power of God” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### your faith might not be

If you cannot use this form in your language, you could express the idea in active form by translating **faith** with a verb such as “trust” or “believe.” Alternate translation: “you might believe not” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### the wisdom of men

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe what **men** think is **wisdom**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form by translating **men** with an adjective such as “human.” Alternate translation: “in human wisdom” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### of men

Although **men** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **men** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “of people” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### the power of God

Here Paul uses the possessive form to speak of **power** that **God** has and shows. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the meaning of this phrase by translating **power** as a verb or adverb with **God** as the subject. Alternate translation: “God working powerfully” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## 1 Corinthians 2:6

### Now

Here, **Now** introduces a contrast with what Paul has said in 2:4–5. In those verses, he said that he did not speak with **wisdom**. In this verse, however, he clarifies that he does **speak** with **wisdom** of a certain kind. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **Now** by using a word that introduces a contrast. Alternate translation: “In spite of this,” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### we speak

Here, **we** refers to Paul and others like him who preach the gospel. It does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.685)**)

### wisdom & wisdom

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **wisdom**, you can express the idea by using by using an adverb such as “wisely” or an adjective such as “wise.” Alternate translation: “wisely ... the wise speech” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### the mature

Paul is using the adjective **mature** 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 **mature** with a noun phrase or a relative clause. Alternate translation: “those who are mature” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### but not wisdom of this age nor of the rulers of this age

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **wisdom** that fits with the standards and values of **this age** and that **rulers of this age** value. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form by using verbal phrases. Alternate translation: “but not wisdom that fits with this age nor wisdom that the rulers of this age value” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### but not wisdom

Here Paul omits some words that may be needed in your language to make this a complete thought. If your language does need these words, you could supply them from earlier in the verse. Alternate translation: “but we do not speak wisdom” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### of the rulers of this age

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **rulers** who are in power during **this age**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form by using language about the time in which the rulers have power or the place in which they have power. Alternate translation: “of the rulers who have power now” or “of the rulers who control this world” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## of the rulers of this age

The **rulers of this age** could refer to: (1) humans who have power. Alternate translation: “of the people who rule this age” (2) spiritual beings that have power. Alternate translation: “of the spiritual powers that rule this age” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## the ones passing away

Paul has already used the word translated **passing away** in [1:28](#), where it is translated **bring to nothing**. Here, the word means that the **rulers** are becoming ineffective, useless, or irrelevant, which means that they will no longer have power. If possible, translate this word like you did in [1:28](#). Alternate translation: “who are becoming ineffective” or “who are losing their power” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 2:7

### we speak & our

Here, **we** refers to Paul and anyone who preaches the gospel. It does not include the Corinthians. However, the word **our** does include the Corinthians along with Paul. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'** (p.685))

### the wisdom of God

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **wisdom** that **God** would consider to be true **wisdom**. This also means that the **wisdom** comes from **God**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by clarifying that the **wisdom** comes from **God**. Alternate translation: "the wisdom from God" (See: **Possession** (p.750))

### the wisdom

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **wisdom**, you can express the idea by using by using an adverb such as "wisely" or an adjective such as "wise." Alternate translation: "the wise message" (See: **Abstract Nouns** (p.618))

### that has been hidden in a mystery

Here Paul uses both **has been hidden** and **in a mystery**. Both of these phrases refer to something that is secret. If using both of these phrases is redundant in your language, you could use only one. Alternate translation: "that has been hidden" or "that is a mystery" (See: **Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit** (p.726))

### that has been hidden

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **the wisdom** that has **been hidden** rather than the person doing the "hiding." If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that "God" does it. Alternate translation: "that God has hidden" (See: **Active or Passive** (p.621))

### that

Here, **that** refers to **the wisdom**, not **a mystery**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could repeat **wisdom** here. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a comma before it. Alternate translation: "the wisdom that" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them** (p.756))

### before the ages

Paul uses the phrase translated **before the ages** to say that God **predestined** before he made anything. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this phrase with a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "before the beginning of time" (See: **Idiom** (p.710))

### for our glory

Here, the phrase translated **for our glory** introduces the purpose for which **God predestined** the **wisdom**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **for our glory** with a word or phrase that introduces a

purpose. Alternate translation: “so that we might have glory” (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship** (p. 650))



## 1 Corinthians 2:8

### which

Just as in 2:7, **which** refers to “the wisdom,” not to “a mystery.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could repeat “wisdom” here. Alternate translation: “the wisdom that” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### of the rulers of this age

Just as in 2:6, Paul uses the possessive form to describe **rulers** who are in power during **this age**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form by using language about the time in which **the rulers** have power or the place in which they have power. Alternate translation: “of the rulers who have power now” or “of the rulers who control this world” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### for

Here, **for** introduces Paul’s proof that **the rulers** did not understand. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the meaning of this word using a word that customarily introduces proof or evidence. Alternate translation: “which is true because” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### if they had understood {it}, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a scenario that he knows is not true. He wants to point out that the **rulers** were the ones who **crucified** Jesus, and this proves that they did not understand God’s wisdom. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form by reversing the two clauses and making **they understood {it}** negative and **they would not have crucified the Lord of glory** positive. Alternate translation: “they crucified the Lord of glory, which means that they did not understand it” (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

### the Lord of glory

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **the Lord** who has **glory**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form by translating **glory** with an adjective or a relative clause. Alternate translation: “the Lord, who has glory” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## 1 Corinthians 2:9

### But

Here, **But** introduces a contrast with the hypothetical statement in 2:8 about how the rulers would not have crucified the Lord if they had understood God's wisdom. The **But** reminds the reader that this hypothetical statement is not true, and Paul wishes to introduce further statements about how people do not understand God's wisdom. If it would be helpful in your language, you could leave **But** untranslated or use a word or phrase that would signal that Paul is no longer speaking hypothetically. Alternate translation: "But instead," (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship** (p.644))

### But just as it is written

Here Paul has omitted some words that may be necessary in your language to form a complete thought. If necessary, you could supply a summary from 2:8 of what the rulers did not understand and how they acted. Alternate translation: "But the rulers did not understand, just as it is written" or "But the rulers did do these things, just as it is written" (See: **Ellipsis** (p.678))

### just as it is written

In Paul's culture, **just as it is written** is a normal way to introduce a quotation from an important text, in this case, the Old Testament book written by Isaiah the prophet (See: [Isaiah 64:4](#)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a comparable phrase that indicates that Paul is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: "as it can be read in the Old Testament" or "according to Isaiah the prophet" (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins** (p.761))

### it is written

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what **is written** rather than the person doing the "writing." If you must state who does the action, you can express it so that: (1) the scripture author writes or speaks the words. Alternate translation: "Isaiah has written" (2) God speaks the words. Alternate translation: "God has said" (See: **Active or Passive** (p.621))

### What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and has not arisen in the heart of man, these things God has prepared for the one loving him

In this quotation, **What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and has not arisen in the heart of man** are the **things God has prepared**. If your language would naturally put **What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and has not arisen in the heart of man** after **God has prepared**, you could reverse the order. Alternate translation: "God has prepared for those who love him what eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and has not arisen in the heart of man" (See: **Information Structure** (p.716))

### What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and has not arisen in the heart of man

Here, the words **eye**, **ear**, and **heart** refer to the parts of the person that see, hear, and think. In each case, the word means that the whole person sees, hears, and thinks. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this way of speaking with a word that refers to a person as a whole instead of just a part of that person.

Alternate translation: "What a person has not seen, and a person has not heard, and has not arisen when a person thinks" (See: **Synecdoche (p.773)**)

## has not arisen in the heart of man

The phrase **heart of man** refers to the place where humans think. If something "arises" there, that means that a human has thought about that thing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of **arisen in the heart of man** with a comparable phrase or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "man has not thought about" or "man has not imagined" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## the heart of man

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe a **heart** that belongs to a **man**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by translating **man** with an adjective such as "human." Alternate translation: "the human heart" (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## of man

Although **man** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **man** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: "of people" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## of man

Here, even though **man** is written in singular form, it refers to anyone who would be considered a **man**, that is, any human. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make **man** plural. Alternate translation: "of men" or "of humans" (See: **Collective Nouns (p.635)**)

## 1 Corinthians 2:10

### For

Here, **For** introduces an explanation of the last line of the quote from 2:9: “these things God has prepared for those who love him.” Paul wants to explain that these are the things that **God has revealed** to those who believe. If it would be helpful in your language, you could leave **For** untranslated or use a word or phrase that introduces an explanation. Alternate translation: “In fact,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### For

Here, **For** introduces an explanation for why God’s revelation is made **to us through the Spirit**. It is because the **Spirit searches everything** and knows everything that is **revealed**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection with a comparable word or phrase that introduces this kind of explanation. Alternate translation: “He works through the Spirit because” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### searches

Here, **searches** refers to how someone can explore or seek to know about something else. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **searches** with another word for “exploring” or “knowing.” Alternate translation: “comprehends” or “knows about” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### the deep things of God

The phrase **deep things of God** refers to things about God that are hard to understand or things about God that no one can fully comprehend. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a comparable expression or state the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “secrets about God” or “things about God that no one knows” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 2:11

### For who among men knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man {that is} within him

Here Paul uses a question because he thinks that everyone will agree with him, for this information is common knowledge in his culture. He does not use a question because he is not sure about the answer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question by using a form that presents information that everyone knows and agrees with. Alternate translation: "For it is a well-known fact that no one among men knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man that is within him." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### For who among men knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man {that is} within him? So also, no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God

In both parts of this verse, Paul makes a negative claim and then offers an exception to that claim. If it would appear in your language that Paul is contradicting himself, you could use a different structure that also singles out one possibility and negates all other possibilities. Alternate translation: "For the spirit of the man that is within him is the only one among men that knows the things of a man, right? So also, the Spirit of God is the only one that knows the things of God" (See: **Connect — Exception Clauses (p.646)**)

### among men & of a man & of the man {that is} within him

Although the words translated **men**, **man**, and **him** are masculine, Paul is using them to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these masculine words with non gendered words or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: "among people ... of a person ... of the person that is within that person" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### of a man & of the man {that is} within him

Paul uses the word **man** to speak of people in general, not one specific person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **man** with a form that indicates people in general in your language. Alternate translation: "of a certain man ... of that certain man that is within him" or "of men ... of men that is within them" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### who among men

The phrase **who among men** is a way of asking about people or things that belong to a specific category. Paul means to ask if there are any **men** who can know **the things of a man**. He uses this phrase because God also **knows the things of a man**, so he must limit his question to only **men**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form by using a phrase that asks about people or things, but only those that belong in a specific category. Alternate translation: "which man" or "out of all men, who" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### the things of a man & the things of God

Here Paul uses the phrases **the things of a man** and **the things of God** to refer to everything that makes up the person, including personality, thoughts, actions, desires, possessions, and many more similar categories. Paul is intentionally general and does not narrow down which of these categories he has in mind. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with an expression that refers to all the aspects of a person that makes

that person unique. Alternate translation: “all the details about a man ... all the details about God” (See: **Idiom (p. 710)**)

### the spirit of the man {that is} within him

Here, the word translated **spirit** is the same word that Paul uses for the Holy **Spirit**. It refers to the interior life of a person, to the part of them that people cannot see, including their thoughts and desires. If possible, use the same word here that you will use later in the verse for the **Spirit**, since Paul is drawing an analogy between the human **spirit** and God's **Spirit**. If you cannot use the word for God's **Spirit** to describe a human being, you could: (1) refer simply to a human without specifying which part of the human **knows**. Alternate translation: “the man himself” (2) use an expression that refers to the interior life of a human. Alternate translation: “the consciousness of the man that is within him” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### the spirit of the man {that is} within him

In this culture, people would speak of the nonphysical part of a human being as if it were inside the physical part of a human being. Here Paul speaks in this way when he says that the **spirit of the man** is **within him**. By using **within him**, Paul is identifying the **spirit** as the one that belongs to **the man**. It is not some other man's **spirit**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **within him** by: (1) using a word or phrase that identifies that the **spirit** belongs to **the man** only. Alternate translation: “that man's own spirit” (2) expressing the idea by using a phrase that describes where a human being's nonphysical part would be in your culture. Alternate translation: “the spirit of the man that permeates him” or “the spirit of the man that suffuses him” (See: **Idiom (p. 710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 2:12

### But

Here, **But** introduces the next part of Paul's argument. If it would be helpful in your language, you could leave **But** untranslated or use a word or phrase that signifies that the argument is moving on. Alternate translation: "Now" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### we did not receive the spirit of the world, but the Spirit from God

If your language would naturally state the negative before the positive, you could reverse the order of the **not** statement and the **but** statement. Alternate translation: "we received the Spirit who is from God, not the spirit of the world" (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### the spirit of the world

The phrase **spirit of the world** could refer to: (1) a **spirit** that does not actually exist. In other words, Paul is saying that the Spirit they received did not come from the **world** but rather came from **God**. Alternate translation: "a spirit that comes from the world" (2) human ways of thinking and understanding, which could be called a **spirit**. In other words, Paul is saying that they did not receive human ways of thinking but rather ways of thinking that God's Spirit brings. Alternate translation: "human ways of thinking" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### the spirit of the world

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe a **spirit** that comes from or has its source in **the world**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a word or phrase that indicates that **the world** is the source or origin of this **spirit**. Alternate translation: "the spirit from the world" or "the spirit that comes from the world" (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### but the Spirit

Here Paul omits some words that may be needed in your language to make a complete thought. If it would be helpful in your language, you could supply some words from earlier in the sentence. Alternate translation: "but we received the Spirit" (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### the Spirit from God

If it would be more natural in your language, you could make God the subject of the **who** statement. Alternate translation: "the Spirit whom God sent" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### the things freely given to us by God

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **the things** that are **given** rather than God, who does the "giving." Alternate translation: "the things that God has freely given to us" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## 1 Corinthians 2:13

### we speak

Here, **we** refers to Paul and others who proclaim the gospel with him. It does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'** (p.685))

### not in words taught by human wisdom but in those taught by the Spirit

If your language would not naturally put the negative statement before the positive statement, you could reverse them, putting **words** with the positive statement. Alternate translation: "in words taught by the Spirit, not in those taught by human wisdom" (See: **Information Structure** (p.716))

### words taught by human wisdom

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the **words** that are **taught** rather than focusing on the person doing the "teaching." If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that "humans" or "people" do it. Alternate translation: "words that human wisdom teaches" or "words that humans teach as wisdom" (See: **Active or Passive** (p.621))

### those taught by the Spirit

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the **words** that are **taught** rather than the **Spirit**, who does the "teaching." Alternate translation: "those that the Spirit teaches" (See: **Active or Passive** (p.621))

### combining spiritual things with spiritual words

Here, the phrase **combining spiritual things with spiritual words** could mean: (1) that Paul and those with him interpret **spiritual things** and ideas with **spiritual words**. Alternate translation: "interpreting spiritual things with spiritual words" (2) that Paul and those with him explain **spiritual things** to **spiritual** people. Alternate translation: "explaining spiritual things to spiritual people" (See: **Translate Unknowns** (p.780))

### combining

Here, **combining** introduces an action that takes place at the same time as when **we speak**. The idea is that **combining spiritual things with spiritual words** is the way that **we speak these things**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this connection by including a word or phrase that indicates that **combining** is the way in which **we speak**. Alternate translation: "by means of combining" (See: **Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship** (p.660))

### combining

Here, **combining** could mean: (1) interpreting or explaining an idea. Alternate translation: "interpreting" (2) putting two things together, either to compare or blend them together. Alternate translation: "comparing" or "compounding" (See: **Translate Unknowns** (p.780))



## 1 Corinthians 2:14

### But

Here, **But** introduces a new part of Paul's argument, and it also introduces a contrast with how Paul and those with him speak by the power of the Spirit in 2:13. Unlike Paul and those with him, the **natural person** does not have the Spirit and does not use spiritual words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could leave **But** untranslated or use a word that introduces a contrast. Alternate translation: "However," (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### the natural person

The phrase **the natural person** describes a person who does not have God's Spirit. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the meaning of this phrase by using a word or phrase that describes someone who has not received God's Spirit. Alternate translation: "the person without the Spirit" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### the natural person does not receive & to him, & he is not able

Paul uses the words **person**, **him**, and **he** to speak of people in general, not one specific man. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of these words with a form that indicates people in general in your language. Alternate translation: "any natural person does not receive ... to him or her ... he or she is not able" or "natural people do not receive ... to them ... they are not able" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### to him, & he is not able

Here, the words translated **him** and **he** are written in masculine form, but they refer to anyone, no matter what their gender might be. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **he** and **him** by using a word that does not have gender, or you could use both genders. Alternate translation: "to that person ... that person is not able" or "to him or her ... he or she is not able" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### they are foolishness to him

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the structure and make **him** the subject of a verb such as "think" or "consider." Alternate translation: "for he thinks that they are foolishness" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### they are spiritually discerned

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what is **discerned** rather than focusing on the person doing the "discerning." If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: "people can only discern them spiritually" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### they are spiritually discerned

Alternate translation: "they are discerned by the power of the Spirit" or "they are discerned by people who are indwelt by the Spirit"

## 1 Corinthians 2:15

### the spiritual one

Here Paul uses **the spiritual one** as the opposite of “the natural person” in 2:14. The phrase **the spiritual one** describes a person who does have God’s Spirit. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the meaning of this phrase by using a word or phrase that describes someone who has received God’s Spirit. Alternate translation: “the person with the Spirit” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### the spiritual one discerns & he himself is discerned

Paul uses the words **spiritual one** and **he himself** to speak of people in general, not one specific man. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of these words with a form that indicates people in general. Alternate translation: “any spiritual person discerns ... he himself or she herself” or “spiritual people discern ... they themselves are discerned” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### all things

Here Paul uses **all things** as an exaggeration that the Corinthians would have understood to emphasize that the **spiritual one** can discern God’s gifts and the message of the gospel. Paul does not mean that every **spiritual** person is able to discern everything there is to know. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this exaggeration by using a phrase such as “many things,” and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “many things indeed” (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

### he himself is discerned by no one

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **he** who is **discerned** rather than the person doing the “discerning.” Alternate translation: “no one discerns him himself” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### he himself is discerned

Here, the words translated **he himself** are written in masculine form, but they refer to anyone, no matter what their gender might be. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **he himself** by using a word that does not have gender, or you could use both genders. Alternate translation: “that person is discerned” or “he himself or she herself is discerned” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### he himself is discerned by no one

Here Paul wishes to say that it is impossible for someone without the Spirit to properly understand or make judgments about the person who does have the Spirit. If this implication would be missed by your readers, you could make it more explicit that Paul is speaking about the impossibility of someone without the Spirit “discerning” someone with the Spirit. Alternate translation: “he himself cannot be discerned by anyone who is not spiritual” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## he himself is discerned

Here, **himself** focuses attention on **the spiritual one**. If **himself** would not draw attention in this way in your language, you could express the attention or focus in another way. Alternate translation: “he is discerned” or “he indeed is discerned” (See: **Reflexive Pronouns (p.763)**)

## 1 Corinthians 2:16

### For

Here, **For** introduces proof from Scripture to support what Paul has said about the “natural person” and the “spiritual” person in 2:14–15. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection with a word or phrase that indicates that Paul is introducing proof. Alternate translation: “you could tell that these things are true, because” or “Indeed,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### For

Here, **For** is the only word that Paul uses to introduce a quotation from the Old Testament, in this case, from the book written by Isaiah the prophet (See: [Isaiah 40:13](#)). If your language would not introduce a quotation in this way, you could use a comparable phrase that indicates that Paul is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: “For, as it can be read in the Old Testament,” or “For, according to Isaiah the prophet,” (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

### who has known the mind of the Lord—who will instruct him

Here, the passage that Paul quotes from the book of Isaiah uses a question to indicate that no human **has known the mind of the Lord**, and no human **will instruct him**. The quoted question is not asking for information. Instead, it assumes that the answer is “no one,” and the author used a question to make a negative claim that is stronger than a simple statement. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the question with a strong negative statement. Alternate translation: “no one has known the mind of the Lord—no one will instruct him.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### the mind of the Lord

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe a **mind** that the **Lord** has or uses. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind that the **Lord** is one who is thinking with **the mind** by using a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: “the thoughts that the Lord thinks” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### have the mind of Christ

Here Paul speaks as if **we** are people who possess **the mind of Christ**. Paul means that **we** are able to understand what Christ thinks and share the same ways of thinking with him. He does not mean that we have taken Christ’s **mind** from him or that we no longer have our own **mind**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express “having someone else’s mind” with a comparable metaphor or with a verb such as “share.” Alternate translation: “think the same thoughts as Christ does” or “share in the mind of Christ” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### the mind of Christ

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe a **mind** that **Christ** has or uses. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind that **Christ** is the one who is thinking with **the mind** by using a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: “the thoughts that Christ thinks” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

# 1 Corinthians 3

## 1 Corinthians 3 General Notes

### Structure and Formatting

Against divisions (1:10–4:15)

- Paul identifies the divisions (3:1–5)
- Farming metaphor (3:6–9a)
- Building metaphor (3:9b–15)
- Temple metaphor (3:16–17)
- Wisdom and folly (3:18–20)
- All things are yours (3:21–23)

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page to make them easier to read. The ULT does this with the quoted words of verses 19 and 20. Verse 19 quotes from Job 5:13, and verse 20 quotes from Psalm 94:11.

## Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

### Fleshly people

In 3:1–4, Paul calls the Corinthian believers “fleshly.” In 3:3, he defines “fleshly” as “walking according to men.” The word “fleshly” thus refers to people who think and behave from a merely human point of view, without thinking and behaving from God’s perspective. The opposite of “fleshly” is “spiritual,” which refers to those who think and behave by the power of the Spirit. (See 3:1, [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/flesh\]\]](#), [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/spirit\]\]](#))

### Fire and judgment

In Paul’s culture, fire was commonly associated with the day when God would come to judge everyone. Paul uses this association when he makes use of the metaphor of a building. When a building catches on fire, it shows how well it was built. Similarly, when the fire of God’s judgment comes, it will show who has taught the gospel correctly. Fire fits within the metaphor of a building, but it is not just a part of that metaphor. If it is possible, retain the language of fire for God’s judgment. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/judgmentday\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/other/fire\]\]](#))

### Wisdom and foolishness

Throughout this chapter, Paul continues to speak of both wisdom and foolishness. Just as in chapters one and two, these words do not refer primarily to how much or how little education someone has. Rather, they refer to how well or how poorly someone plans actions and knows how the world works. Continue to use the words you chose in chapters one and two. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/wise\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/foolish\]\]](#))

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Infants and food metaphor

In 3:1–2, Paul speaks as if the Corinthians are infants who were, and still are, unable to eat any solid food, but can only drink milk. By speaking about them as if they were infants, Paul wishes to tell the Corinthians that they are spiritually immature enough that they can only drink milk. Paul uses “milk” to refer to the very basic teachings

about Christ, while he uses “solid food” to refer to the more advanced teachings. In translating this metaphor, use words that identify what very small children can eat (milk) and what they cannot eat (solid food). (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

## Farming metaphor

In [3:6–9a](#), Paul speaks as if he and Apollos were farmers. Paul first proclaimed the gospel to the Corinthians, so he is like a farmer who plants seeds. Apollos taught the Corinthians more about the gospel, so he is like a farmer who waters the plants when they start to grow. However, God is the one who makes seeds grow into plants and the one who enables believers to accept and learn more about the gospel. With this metaphor, Paul wishes to emphasize that he and Apollos are equal in that they both teach about the gospel. However, neither one of them is significant in comparison to God, who is the one who actually enables people to accept and believe in the gospel. If possible, preserve the farming metaphor, even if you need to adjust some of the details. (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

## Building metaphor

In [3:9b–15](#), Paul speaks of the Corinthians as if they were a house. Paul is the one who laid the house’s foundation, because he was the one who first proclaimed the gospel to them. Other people, whom Paul does not name, build on the foundation. They are the ones who are teaching the Corinthians more, whether what they teach is correct or not. Paul then says that the building will catch on fire, and what each of these builders used to construct the house will become evident. If they built with durable materials, they will be rewarded, but if they built with materials that burn, they will suffer loss, and the builders themselves will barely escape from the fire. In speaking this way, Paul is warning those who teach more about the gospel that God himself will judge whether what they teach is correct or not. If it is incorrect, those teachers will lose everything and barely be saved themselves. If it is correct, God will honor and reward those teachers. If possible, preserve the building metaphor, even if you need to adjust some of the details. (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

## Temple metaphor

In [3:16–17](#), Paul speaks as if the Corinthians were God’s temple. By speaking this way, he identifies the Corinthian believers as a place where God is specially present. Paul then notes that anyone who does anything to harm God’s temple will be punished by God. Since the Corinthians are like God’s temple, God will punish anyone who does anything to harm them, including if anyone tries to divide them up into different groups. (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

## Rhetorical questions

Paul asks many questions in this chapter ([3:3–5](#); [16](#)). He is not asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to provide him with information. Rather, he is asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to think about how they are acting and what they are thinking. The questions encourage them to think along with Paul. For ways to translate these questions, look for the notes on each verse that includes these kinds of questions. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Christ is God’s

In [3:23](#), Paul says that “Christ is God’s.” He does not mean that Christ is a person who belongs to God but is not God. Rather, he means that Christ is part of who God is. Christ belongs to the being of God. In your translation, you should try to preserve this meaning. However, if possible, do not make your translation into a statement about the divinity of Christ, since that is not the main point that Paul is trying to make.

# 1 Corinthians 3:1

## And I

The word translated **And I** is the same word that appears at the beginning of 2:1. Just as there, Paul uses **And I** here to introduce how his own experience visiting the Corinthians fits into the general pattern he has outlined at the end of chapter 2. Here, however, his experience with the Corinthians is the opposite of what he would have liked. Therefore, the words **And I** introduce a contrast with what he said in 2:16 about having the mind of Christ. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the meaning of **And I** by using a word or phrase that introduces a specific example or a word or phrase that introduces a contrast. Alternate translation: “But I” or “As for me, I” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

## brothers

Although **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “brothers and sisters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## was not able to speak to you as to spiritual, but as to fleshly, as to infants in Christ

If your language would not naturally state the negative before the positive, you could reverse the order of the **not** statement and the **but** statements. Alternate translation: “had to speak to you as to fleshly, as to infants in Christ, not as to spiritual” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

## to spiritual, & to fleshly

Paul is using the adjectives **spiritual** and **fleshly** as nouns in order to describe groups of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate these with noun phrases. Alternate translation: “to spiritual people ... to fleshly people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

## but as to fleshly, as to infants

Here Paul leaves out some words that might be required in your language to make a complete thought. If it would be helpful in your language, you could supply the needed words from earlier in the sentence. Alternate translation: “but I spoke to you as to fleshly; I spoke to you as to infants” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## to infants in Christ

Here Paul speaks as if the Corinthians were **infants**. He wants the Corinthians to think about how **infants** are immature, lack knowledge, and are unable to understand most things. By calling the Corinthians **infants in Christ**, he means that in their relationship with Jesus, they are immature, have little knowledge, and are unable to understand very much. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express why Paul calls the Corinthians **infants** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “to beginners in Christ” or “to those who could understand very little about their faith in Christ” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## in Christ

Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in Christ** to describe the union of believers with Christ. In this case, being **in Christ**, or united to Christ, explains in what area of their lives they were like **infants**. They acted like **infants** in their

relationship with Christ. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **in Christ** by referring to their “faith” in **Christ** or their “relationship” with **Christ**. Alternate translation: “in their faith in Christ” or “in their relationship with Christ” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)



## 1 Corinthians 3:2

### I gave you milk to drink, not solid food

Paul is using **milk**, the food of “infants” (See: [3:1](#)), which is easy to digest, to represent things that are easy to understand. Paul is using **solid food**, which is harder to digest, to represent things that are harder to understand. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “I had to let you crawl, not walk” or “I taught you things that are easy to understand, not things that are hard to understand” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### not solid food

Here Paul has omitted some words that may be necessary to make a complete thought in your language. If your language needs these words, you could add a phrase such as “to eat.” Alternate translation: “not solid food to eat” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### you were not yet able. & even now, you are not able

Here Paul has omitted some words that may be necessary to make a complete thought in your language. If your language needs these words, you could add them here, supplying the idea from earlier in the verse. Alternate translation: “you were not yet able to eat solid food ... even now, you are not able to eat solid food” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### Indeed

Here, **Indeed** functions to contrast the time when Paul visited the Corinthians with the time when Paul is writing this letter. He speaks of these two different times to say that the Corinthians could not to eat the **solid food** at either time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Indeed** with a word or phrase that contrasts two times or a word that introduces additional information. Alternate translation: “In fact” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

## 1 Corinthians 3:3

### fleshly. & fleshly

Paul is using the adjective **fleshly** 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 adjective with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: “fleshly people ... fleshly people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### where {there is} jealousy and strife among you

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **jealousy** and **strife**, you can express the ideas by using verbs such as “being jealous” and “fighting.” Alternate translation: “where you are jealous and fight with one another” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### where {there is}

The word **where** often refers to space. However, here Paul uses it to indicate that something exists without focusing on exactly **where** in space that thing is. Instead of identifying a specific location, it identifies existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **whereby** using a word that refers to whether something exists or not. Alternate translation: “if there is” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

### are you not fleshly and walking according to men

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information or for agreement or disagreement. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “yes.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a statement that draws a conclusion from the **jealousy** and the **strife**. Alternate translation: “you are fleshly and walking according to men” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### and

Here Paul uses **and** to introduce a definition of what **fleshly** means. It means **walking according to men**. If you cannot use **and** to introduce a definition or explanation, you could use another word or phrase that does introduce a definition or explanation. If you use one of the following alternate translations, you may need to add a comma before it. Alternate translation: “that is, are you not” or “which means” (See: **Hendiadys (p.696)**)

### walking according to men

Paul speaks of behavior in life as if it were **walking**. If **walking** would not be understood as a description of a person’s way of life in your language, you could express the idea with a comparable metaphor or plainly. Alternate translation: “behaving as men do” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### according to men

Here Paul speaks of behavior that is **according to men**. He uses this phrase to refer to behaviors done by people who think and act in only human ways. These people do not have God’s Spirit, so they “walk” according to the values and goals of this world. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **according to men** by using a word or phrase that refers to things and behaviors valued by people who do not believe. Alternate translation: “according to what mere humans value” or “according to this world” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## men

Although **men** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **men** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: "humans" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## 1 Corinthians 3:4

### For

Here, **For** introduces further evidence for Paul's argument that the Corinthians are acting in merely human ways. If it would be helpful in your language, you could leave **For** untranslated or express the idea using a word or phrase that introduces more evidence or examples. Alternate translation: "Indeed," (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases** (p.662))

### one says, "& another

Here Paul uses the pronouns **one** and **another** to give two examples of some people in the Corinthian church who are saying these kinds of things. He does not mean that only two people are saying these things. He also does not mean that these are the only things that people in the church are saying. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with words that introduce examples of a larger pattern, and you could add a phrase that indicates that the words **I am of Paul** and **I am of Apollos** are two examples of the kinds of things that they are saying. Alternate translation: "some people among you say things like ... other people among you say things like" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them** (p.756))

### I am of Paul," & I am of Apollos

If you cannot use this form in your language, you could translate these statements as indirect quotes instead of as direct quotes. Alternate translation: "that he or she is of Paul ... that he or she is of Apollos" (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations** (p.668))

### I am of Paul," & I am of Apollos

Just as in 1:12, Paul uses the possessive form to indicate that people are claiming to be part of a specific leader's group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form with a word such as "belong" or "follow." Alternate translation: "'I follow Paul' ... 'I follow Apollos'" (See: **Possession** (p.750))

### are you not men

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information or for agreement or disagreement. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is "yes." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a statement that draws a conclusion from what Paul says the Corinthians are saying. Alternate translation: "you are men" or "this shows that you are men" (See: **Rhetorical Question** (p.766))

### men

When Paul says that the Corinthians are **men**, he means that they are "only" or "merely" **men**. He is not identifying them as humans. Rather, he means that they are acting and speaking from "merely human" perspective rather than from God's perspective, a perspective they can share if they have God's Spirit. If it would be helpful in your language, you could add a word or phrase that clarifies that **men** refers to a "merely human" view of the world. Alternate translation: "merely men" or "speaking from a human perspective" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information** (p.626))

## men

Although **men** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **men** with a non-gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “humans” or “men and women” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## 1 Corinthians 3:5

### then

Here, **then** introduces a further stage in Paul's argument. He has argued in 3:4 that **Paul** and **Apollos** should not be treated as leaders of groups. In this verse, he goes on to explain how he thinks that **Paul** and **Apollos** should be treated, which is as servants of Christ. Thus, the word translated **then** introduces who **Paul** and **Apollos** really are. If it would be helpful in your language, you could leave **then** untranslated or use a word that introduces the next step in an argument. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a comma before it. Alternate translation: "therefore," (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases** (p.662))

### Who then is Apollos? And who is Paul? Servants

Here Paul uses these questions to do two things. First, the questions imply that **Apollos** and **Paul** are not very important. Therefore, an implied answer to these questions would be that **Apollos** and **Paul** are "not very much." Second, Paul uses the questions to introduce his own answer to these questions. After using the questions to imply that he and **Apollos** are not much, he then states that they are **servants**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind these questions as a statement about the status of **Apollos** and **Paul** as **servants**, and you could use a word such as "only" or "merely" to express the idea that they are not very important. Alternate translation: "Apollos and Paul are merely servants" (See: **Rhetorical Question** (p.766))

### is Paul

In this verse, **Paul** speaks of himself in the third person. This could sound like he is speaking about a different **Paul** than himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this use of **Paul** by clarifying that **Paul** is naming himself. Alternate translation: "am I, Paul" (See: **First, Second or Third Person** (p.687))

### Servants through whom you believed

Here Paul omits several words that may be required in your language to make a complete thought. If your language needs these words, you could include words such as "we are" or "they are." Alternate translation: "We are servants through whom you believed" or "They are servants through whom you believed" (See: **Ellipsis** (p.678))

### Servants through whom you believed

When **Paul** says that he and **Apollos** are those **through whom** the Corinthians **believed**, he is implying that the Corinthians believed in someone other than **Paul** and **Apollos**. That is, they believed in Christ. If your readers would not make this inference about **whom** the Corinthians **believed** in, you could make it explicit by including what the Corinthians **believed** in, which is "Christ" and not **Apollos** or **Paul**. Alternate translation: "Servants through whom you believed in Christ" or "Servants through whom you believed in Christ, not in us" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information** (p.626))

### even as

Here, the words translated **even as** introduce the way in which **Apollos** and **Paul** act as **servants**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection with a word or phrase that would introduce the ways in which **Apollos** and **Paul** are servants. Alternate translation: "who do what" or "serving just as" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases** (p.662))

## even as the Lord gave to each one

Here Paul omits what **the Lord gave** because it would be clear that he means that **the Lord gave** a specific job or task **to each one** of them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could add a word or phrase to **the Lord gave to each one** to indicate that **the Lord gave** a specific job or task. Alternate translation: “even as the Lord gave a task to teach one” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## to each one

Here, **to each one** directly refers back to **Apollos** and **Paul**. However, it also probably refers to everyone who serves the Lord. If you can refer to multiple individuals considered separately in your language, you could use that form here. Alternate translation: “to each and every one who serves him” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## 1 Corinthians 3:6

### I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused {it} to grow

Paul speaks about the roles that God gave to him and to **Apollos** as if they were farmers who **planted** and **watered** their crops. See the chapter introduction for further explanation of this metaphor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the way that Paul uses farming language to describe how the Corinthians received the gospel with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "I introduced you to the gospel, Apollos taught you more about the gospel, but God enabled you to believe" (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

### I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused {it} to grow

Paul never states what it is that he **planted**, that **Apollos watered**, and that **God caused {it} to grow**. He does not state what it is because he wishes to use a general statement about farming practices. If you need to state what is **planted** and **watered**, you could include a general word or words such as "seed," "plant," or "crop." Alternate translation: "I planted the seeds, Apollos watered the plants, but God caused the crop to grow" or "I planted the crop, Apollos watered it, but God caused it to grow" (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### planted, Apollos watered, but God

Here Paul uses **but** to contrast himself and **Apollos** with **God**. The point is that what he did and what **Apollos** did are at the same level of importance, but God's work is the most important. Another way to understand this contrast is to notice that Paul and **Apollos** assist in the process of plants growing, but **God** is the only one who actually makes them grow. Again, the main point is that Paul and **Apollos** are simply "servants" of God (3:5) in a process that God oversees. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **but** with a word or phrase that puts Paul and **Apollos** together in contrast with **God**. Alternate translation: "planted, and Apollos watered. However, it was God who" (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)



## 1 Corinthians 3:7

### So then

Here, **so then** introduces a conclusion or inference from what Paul has said about watering, planting, and growth in 3:6. He wishes to explain that the difference between **God causing the growth** and anyone **planting** or **watering** relates to their importance in the process. It is **God** who is important, because he is the only one **causing the growth**, just as Paul stated in 3:6. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **so then** with a comparable word or phrase that introduces a conclusion or an inference. Alternate translation: “Therefore” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### neither the one planting nor the one watering is anything, but God {is} the one causing the growth

Paul now speaks in general about the tasks that God has given to those who proclaim the gospel. He continues to speak as if those who proclaim the gospel were farmers who planted and watered their crops. See the chapter introduction for further explanation of this metaphor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the way that Paul uses farming language to describe how people proclaim the gospel and how God enables others to receive it with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “neither the person who introduces believers to the gospel nor the person who teaches believers more about the gospel is anything, but God is the one who enables believers to have faith” (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

### the one planting & the one watering

When Paul speaks of **the one planting**, he has himself in mind. When he speaks of **the one watering**, he has Apollos in mind. This is clear from what he says in the last verse (3:6). However, he is now speaking in more general terms. He does not mean just **one** person who does **planting** and one person who does **watering**. Rather, he wishes to refer to anyone who does either of these tasks. If the phrase **the one** would not be understood to mean that in your language, you could use a word or phrase that refers to any person who does the task. Alternate translation: “any person who plants ... any person who waters” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### the one planting & the one watering

Paul never states what it is that someone is **planting** and what someone else is **watering**. He does not state what it is because he wishes to use a general statement about farming practices. If you need to state what is planted and watered, you could include a general word or words such as “seed,” “plant,” or “crop.” Alternate translation: “the one who plants the seeds ... the one who waters the plants” or “the one who plants the crop ... the one who waters it” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### anything

Here, **anything** is an exaggeration the Corinthians would have understood as emphasis on how unimportant the people who plant and water are. It is as if they were nothing, as if they did not exist. Paul does not mean that they do not exist. Instead, he uses this exaggeration to show how unimportant the people who plant and water are compared to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **anything** with a word or phrase that indicates “importance.” Alternate translation: “important” or “significant” (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

## but God {is} the one causing the growth

Here Paul does not directly finish the contrast between the people who plant and water and **God**. What he means is that **God** is the one who is important, because he is **causing the growth**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could supply the words that Paul omits, including a word or phrase about how God is “important.” Alternate translation: “but God, who is the one who causes the growth, is the important one” or “but God is the significant one because he causes the growth” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## causing the growth

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **growth**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “grow.” Alternate translation: “who makes it grow” or “who causes things to grow” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 3:8

### Now

Here, **Now** introduces the next step in Paul's argument. If it would be helpful in your language, you could leave **Now** untranslated or use a word or phrase that introduces the next step in an argument. Alternate translation: "Indeed," (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases** (p.662))

### the one planting and the one watering are one, and each will receive his own wages according to his own labor

Here Paul continues to speak as if those who proclaim the gospel were farmers who planted and watered their crops. See the chapter introduction for further explanation of this metaphor. The **one planting** and the **one watering** will receive **wages** that match the kind of **labor** they did. In the same way, those who first proclaim the gospel and those who teach more about the gospel will receive rewards from God that match the task they accomplished. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the way that Paul uses farming language to describe how people proclaim the gospel and how God rewards those who do so with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "the person who introduces believers to the gospel and the person who teaches believers more about the gospel are one, and each will receive his own reward from God according to his own task" (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors** (p.630))

### the one planting & the one watering

Just as in 3:7, when Paul speaks of **the one planting**, he has himself in mind. When he speaks of **the one watering**, he has Apollos in mind. This is clear from what he says in 3:6. However, he is now speaking in more general terms. He does not mean just **one** person who is **planting** and one person who is **watering**. Rather, he wishes to refer to anyone who does either of these tasks. If the phrase **the one** would not be understood to mean that in your language, you could use a word or phrase that refers to any person who does the task. Alternate translation: "any person who plants ... any person who waters" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases** (p.692))

### the one planting & the one watering

Paul never states what it is that someone is **planting** and that someone else is **watering**. He does not state what it is because he wishes to use a general statement about farming practices. If you need to state what is planted and watered, you could include a general word or words such as "seed," "plant," or "crop." Alternate translation: "the one who plants the seeds ... the one who waters the plants" or "the one who plants the crop ... the one who waters it" (See: **Ellipsis** (p.678))

### are one

Paul here speaks as if the **one planting** and the **one watering** are the same person. He speaks in this way in order to: (1) show that the **one planting** and the **one watering** do the same kind of work with the same goal in mind. Alternate translation: "share a common goal" or "do the same kind of work" (2) state that the **one planting** and the **one watering** have equal status. Alternate translation: "are of equal importance" (See: **Metaphor** (p.730))

### his own & his own

Here, the words translated **his** are written in masculine form, but they refer to anyone, no matter what their gender might be. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **his** by using a word

that does not have gender, or you could use both genders. Alternate translation: “his or her own ... his or her own” or “that person’s own ... that person’s own” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## 1 Corinthians 3:9

### For

Here, **For** introduces a summary statement that concludes the whole section in which Paul compares those who proclaim the gospel to farmers (3:5–8). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **For** by using a word or phrase that introduces a summary statement. Alternate translation: “Thus,” or “In the end,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases** (p.662))

### we are

Here, **we** refers to Paul, Apollos, and others who proclaim the gospel; **we** does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’** (p.685))

### God’s fellow workers

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe: (1) **fellow workers** who work for **God**. Alternate translation: “coworkers under God’s leadership” (2) **workers** who join **God** in God’s work. Alternate translation: “people who work with God” (See: **Possession** (p.750))

### you are God’s field, God’s building

Here Paul switches from a metaphor about farming to a metaphor about building. He makes this switch without using any connecting words, and he makes the switch within one sentence. Consider whether your language would include the introduction of a new topic at the end of the previous section or at the beginning of a new section, and put **God’s building** where it would be understood as introducing a new section. Include **you are** again if it would be necessary. Additionally, if your language would not begin a new section without using a connecting word or phrase, you could use such a word or phrase here. Alternate translation: “you are God’s field. In fact, you are also God’s building” (See: **Information Structure** (p.716))

### God’s field

Here Paul concludes the farming metaphor he began in 3:6. He identifies the Corinthians as a **field** that is owned by **God**. It is in this field that those who proclaim the gospel “plant” and “water” the crop. By calling the Corinthians a **God’s field**, Paul means to say that they belong to God and that they are the people among whom those who proclaim the gospel labor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “people who belong to God and among whom we work” (See: **Metaphor** (p.730))

### God’s building

Here Paul introduces a new metaphor that compares the Corinthians to a building. This building belongs to God, and those who proclaim the gospel, including Paul, help to construct the building. He uses this metaphor and variations of it in 3:9–17. Here, he calls the Corinthians **God’s building**, by which he means basically the same thing as when he calls them **God’s field**. They belong to God, and he and others who proclaim the gospel work among them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this metaphor with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “people who belong to God and among whom we work” (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors** (p.630))

## 1 Corinthians 3:10

### of God that was given to me

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the **grace** that **was given** rather than focusing on the person doing the “giving.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “that God gave me” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

**ὡς σοφὸς ἀρχιτέκτων θεμέλιον ἔθηκα, ἄλλος δὲ ἐποικοδομεῖ. ἕκαστος δὲ βλεπέτω, πῶς ἐποικοδομεῖ.**

Paul began using the metaphor of a house in 3:9. Here he continues that metaphor by speaking about himself as a **wise master builder** who lays **a foundation**. By speaking in this way, he means that he is the one who first introduced the Corinthian believers to the gospel, just like a **master builder** first lays **a foundation**. He then speaks of people who build **{on}** that foundation, meaning that others who proclaim more about the gospel can only do this by using and continuing from the good news that Paul already proclaimed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this extended metaphor with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “as a wise church planter, I first proclaimed the gospel to you, and another is teaching you more about that gospel, but let each one be careful how he teaches you more” (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

### as a wise master builder, I laid a foundation

The phrase **as a wise master builder** could describe: (1) the way in which Paul **laid a foundation**. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a comma before it. Alternate translation: “I laid a foundation as a wise master builder” (2) the specific **grace** that God gave to Paul. Alternate translation: “to be a wise master builder, I laid a foundation” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### a wise master builder

Here, **master builder** refers to the person who is in charge of an entire construction project, including designing it and making sure that the building is constructed according to the design. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **master builder** with a comparable word or phrase. Alternate translation: “a wise architect” or “a wise construction manager” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### another is building {on it}

Here, **another** refers to anyone who **is building {on}** the foundation, including Apollos. However, Paul does not mean to identify one specific person who **is building**. If your readers would not infer that **another** refers to any builder, you could use a word or phrase that identifies any person who does a specific task. Alternate translation: “other people are building on it” or “someone else is building on it” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### let each one be careful

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should.” Alternate translation: “each one should be careful” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

## each one

Here, **each one** refers to any person who **builds** on the **foundation**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **each one** with a word or phrase that identifies any person who falls into a certain category. Alternate translation: “every person who builds on it” or “each builder” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## he builds {on it

Here, **he** is written in masculine form, but it refers to anyone, no matter what their gender might be. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **he** by using a word that does not have gender, or you could use both genders. Alternate translation: “he or she builds on it” or “each one builds on it” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## 1 Corinthians 3:11

### for

Here, **for** introduces the reason why the people who build on the foundation should “be careful how” they build “on it” (3:10). They need to “be careful” because what they build must match the only **foundation** that exists, which is **Jesus Christ**. If **for** would not indicate this connection in your language, you could express the idea with a word that gives a reason or basis for a command. Alternate translation: “because” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship** (p.655))

### no one is able to lay a foundation other than the one being laid, that is, Jesus Christ

Paul continues the metaphor about houses, again speaking about a **foundation**. Here, he reminds the Corinthians that each house has only one **foundation**, and once that **foundation** has been **laid**, no one lays another **foundation** for the house. He speaks in this way to remind them that only one person can introduce them to the gospel, and anyone who tries to introduce them to another gospel is building a different house, not the same house. Paul then directly states that the **foundation** refers to the message about **Jesus Christ** that he preached to them and which should be the starting point and basis for everything else they learn about the gospel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this metaphor with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “no one can first proclaim a gospel to you other than the one that I already proclaimed to you, which is Jesus Christ” (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors** (p.630))

### the one being laid

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what is **being laid** rather than focusing on the person doing the “laying.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that he himself does it. Alternate translation: “the one that I already laid” (See: **Active or Passive** (p.621))

### that is, Jesus Christ

If you use the second alternate translation, you may need to change the comma to a period before it. Alternate translation: “which is Jesus Christ” or “That foundation is Jesus Christ”

### Jesus Christ

Here Paul uses the words translated **Jesus Christ** to refer to the message he proclaimed to them about **Jesus Christ**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could include a word or phrase that refers to Paul’s message about **Jesus Christ**. Alternate translation: “the good news about Jesus Christ” (See: **Metonymy** (p.736))



## 1 Corinthians 3:12

### Now

Here, **Now** introduces the next step in Paul's argument. If it would be helpful in your language, you could leave **Now** untranslated or use a word or phrase that introduces the next step in an argument. Alternate translation: "Indeed," (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases** (p.662))

### if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw

Here Paul continues the metaphor about building a house. He compares those who teach about the gospel with builders who construct a house on its foundation. These builders can use a variety of different materials to construct the house, and Paul lists six. The first three, **gold, silver, precious stones**, are more durable, while the last three, **wood, hay, or straw**, are less durable. It is clear that Paul is interested in durability, because of the next verse, where he states that all of these materials will be tested with fire (3:13). By speaking this way, he indicates that those who proclaim more about the gospel can teach things that are more or less true and acceptable to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this metaphor with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "if anyone teaches you more about the gospel with words that are acceptable to God or words that are not acceptable to God" (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors** (p.630))

### if anyone builds on the foundation

Here Paul uses a conditional **if**, but he does not think that this is a hypothetical situation or something that is likely not true. Instead, Paul thinks that people are "building" on the foundation, and he wants to talk about how they are doing so. Additionally, the "then" part of the **if** statement does not begin until the next verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could rephrase this form and structure by stating the condition as a circumstance or an assumption. Alternate translation: "whenever people build on the foundation, using" or "when anyone builds on the foundation" (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions** (p.648))

### with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw

These six things are all materials that could be used in constructing buildings. The first three will survive if the building catches on fire, but the last three will not (for the fire, see 3:13-15). In your culture, you may not use all of these materials for constructing buildings. In that case, you could include just some of these materials or include materials that you do use for constructing buildings in your culture, making sure to include some materials will not burn up and others that will burn up. Alternate translation: "steel, concrete, lumber, or cloth" (See: **Translate Unknowns** (p.780))

## 1 Corinthians 3:13

**the work of each one will become evident, for the day will display {it}; for it is revealed in fire, and the fire itself will test of what sort is the work of each one**

Here Paul continues the metaphor about building a house. He speaks as if **the day** of God's judgment is like a fire that **will test** the building and show what kind of building materials the builders used. Paul speaks in this way to illustrate how God's judgment will reveal whether what those who proclaim more about the gospel teach is pleasing to him or not. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this metaphor with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "the truth of what each one has taught you will become evident, for God will show how true it is when he comes to judge everyone; when he comes, he will judge everyone, and his judgment will reveal whether what each person has taught is true or not" (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

**the work of each one**

Here, **work** refers to the product or result of the **work**, not the action of "working." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **work** with a word or phrase that refers to the product of the **work**. Alternate translation: "what each one has made" (See: **Synecdoche (p.773)**)

**the work of each one will become evident**

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the **work** that will be **evident** rather than the person doing making it **evident**. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that "God" does it. Alternate translation: "God will make the work of each one evident" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

**the day will display {it}**

Here Paul uses **day** in the same way the Old Testament uses it: to refer to an event in which God saves his people and punishes his enemies. Paul specifically refers to the event in which Jesus returns to judge everyone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could include more words that clarify what Paul means by **day**. Alternate translation: "the day of Christ's return will display" or "when Christ returns, he will display it" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

**it is revealed in fire**

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what is **revealed** rather than the person doing the "revealing." If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that "God" does it. Alternate translation: "God reveals it in fire" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

**it is revealed**

Here, **it is revealed** refers to **the day**. It does not refer to the **work**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could clarify that **it** refers to **the day**. Alternate translation: "that day is revealed" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## it is revealed

Here Paul speaks as if the day **is revealed** right now. In his language, he can use the present tense to speak about the way in which something happens in general, even if it is not happening in the present moment. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this use of the present tense by using the future tense. Alternate translation: “it will be revealed” (See: **Predictive Past (p.754)**)

## in fire

Alternate translation: “with fire” or “in a fiery way”

## the fire itself

Here, **itself** focuses attention on **the fire**. If **itself** would not draw attention in this way in your language, you could express the attention or focus in another way. Alternate translation: “that fire” or “the fire indeed” (See: **Reflexive Pronouns (p.763)**)

## 1 Corinthians 3:14

### If anyone's work that he built will remain, he will receive a reward

Here and in 3:15, Paul uses **If** to introduce a true possibility. He means that a person's **work** might remain, or it might not. He then specifies the result for each possibility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **If** statement by using a relative clause. Alternate translation: "Anyone whose work that he built will remain will receive a reward" (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### If anyone's work that he built will remain, he will receive a reward

Here Paul continues the metaphor about building a house. In this verse, he notes that builders whose structures survive a fire receive rewards. He speaks in this way to indicate that God will reward those who proclaim more about the gospel if God finds their teachings to be accurate and acceptable to him when he judges everyone. The **reward** includes public recognition and other blessings. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this metaphor with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "If anyone teaches you more about the gospel with words that are acceptable to God, he will be honored by God" (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

### anyone's work that he built

Here Paul speaks both of **work** and what **he built**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine the ideas into one expression. Alternate translation: "anyone's building project" or "what anyone built" (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)

### work

Here Paul uses **work** to refer to the product or result of the **work**, not the action of "working." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **work** with a word or phrase that refers to the product of the **work**. Alternate translation: "project" or "house" (See: **Synecdoche (p.773)**)

### will remain

Alternate translation: "does not burn up"

### anyone's & he built & he will receive

Here, **he** is written in masculine form, but it refers to anyone, no matter what their gender might be. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **he** by using a word that does not have gender, or you could use both genders. Alternate translation: "anyone's ... he or she built ... he or she will receive" or "people's ... they built ... they will receive" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## 1 Corinthians 3:15

### if anyone's work will be burned up, he will suffer loss

Here, just as in 3:14, Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that a person's work might remain, or it might not. He then specifies the result for each possibility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by using a relative clause. Alternate translation: "Anyone whose work will be burned up will suffer loss" (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### if anyone's work will be burned up, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, but as though through fire

Here Paul continues the metaphor about building a house. In this verse, those who proclaim more about the gospel are like builders whose structures do not survive a fire. They **suffer loss**, but they are **saved**, almost as if they were in the fire but escaped. Paul means that those who teach others wrongly about God will not receive honor or reward from God, but God will still accept them, although only just barely. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this metaphor with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "If anyone teaches you more about the gospel with words that are not acceptable to God, he will receive no honor or blessing when God judges everyone, but he himself will be accepted by God, although just barely" (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

### anyone's work will be burned up

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the **work** that is **burned up** rather than on what does the "burning up." If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that the **fire** does it. Alternate translation: "fire burns up anyone's work" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### work

Here Paul uses **work** to refer to the product or result of the **work**, not the action of "working." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **work** with a word or phrase that refers to the product of the **work**. Alternate translation: "project" or "house" (See: **Synecdoche (p.773)**)

### anyone's & he will suffer loss, & he himself will be saved

Here, the words translated **he** and **himself** are written in masculine form, but they refer to anyone, no matter which their gender might be. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **he** and **himself** by using words that do not have gender, or you could use both genders. Alternate translation: "anyone's ... he or she will suffer loss ... he himself or she herself will be saved" or "people's ... they will suffer loss ... they themselves will be saved" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### he will suffer loss

The phrase **he will suffer loss** expresses the opposite of "receiving a reward." Instead of gaining honor and money, the person loses honor and money. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **he will suffer loss** by using a phrase that refers to losing honor and money. Alternate translation: "he will lose honor and money" or "he will be deprived of any reward" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## but he himself will be saved

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **he** who will **be saved** rather than the person doing the “saving.” you can express the idea with **he** saving **himself** or **he** not perishing. Alternate translation: “but he will not perish” or “but he will save himself” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## he himself will be saved

Here, **himself** focuses attention on **he**. If **himself** would not draw attention in this way in your language, you could express the attention or focus in another way. Alternate translation: “he will be saved” or “he indeed will be saved” (See: **Reflexive Pronouns (p.763)**)

## 1 Corinthians 3:16

### **Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and the Spirit of God lives in you**

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information or for agreement or disagreement. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing by reminding them of something that they should already know. The question assumes that the answer is “yes.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with an emphatic statement. Alternate translation: “you know that you are a temple of God, and you know that the Spirit of God lives in you” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### **Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and the Spirit of God lives in you**

Here Paul develops the metaphor about constructing a building in new ways. First, he says that the Corinthians together are **a temple of God**, which is a specific type of building. The **temple of God** was the place where God was present in a special way. Paul is thus identifying the Corinthians as people among whom God is present in the same kind of special way. Second, he says that the Corinthians together are the house or city in which the **Spirit of God lives**. The house or city in which someone lives is where they are always present. Paul is thus saying that the Holy Spirit is always present with the Corinthians. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of Paul’s metaphors with a comparable metaphor or express the idea in nonfigurative language. Alternate translation: “Do you not know that you are the sacred shrine where God dwells, and you are the country in which the Spirit of God has residency?” or “Do you not know that God is present among you, and the Spirit of God is always with you?” (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

## 1 Corinthians 3:17

**If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy that {person}. For the temple of God is holy, which you are**

Here Paul finishes the metaphor about the temple that he began in 3:16. He notes that, because God's temple is **holy**, God will **destroy** anyone who **destroys** the temple. He then again repeats that the Corinthians **are** the temple. By speaking in this way, Paul wishes to remind everyone among the Corinthian believers that "destroying" the unity of the believers is like "destroying" the **temple**, and God will act in response to this like he would if someone "destroyed" his **temple**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this metaphor with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "If anyone desecrates God's sacred shrine, God will punish that person. For the sacred shrine is holy, and you are God's sacred shrine" or "If anyone divides the place of God's presence, God will punish that person. For wherever God's presence can be found is holy, and you are the place where God's presence can be found" (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

**If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy that {person**

Here Paul uses **If** to introduce a true possibility. He means that a person might destroy God's temple, or that person might not. He then specifies the consequence if someone does destroy God's temple. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **If** statement by using a relative clause. Alternate translation: "God will destroy anyone who destroys the temple of God" (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

**which you are**

Here, **which** could refer to: (1) **the temple of God**. Alternate translation: "which temple you are" (2) **holy**. Alternate translation: "and you too are holy" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)



## 1 Corinthians 3:18

### Let no one deceive himself. & let him become a “fool

In this verse, Paul uses two third-person imperatives. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use them here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the ideas using a word such as “should.” Alternate translation: “No one should deceive himself ... he should become a ‘fool’” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives** (p.777))

### Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks he is wise in this age, let him become a “fool,” that he may become wise

Here, the words translated **himself**, **he**, and **him** are written in masculine form, but they refer to anyone, no matter what their gender might be. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **himself**, **he**, and **him** by using words that do not have gender, or you could use both genders. Alternate translation: “Let no one deceive himself or herself. If anyone among you thinks he or she is wise in this age, let him or her become a ‘fool,’ that he or she may become wise” or “Let no people deceive themselves. If any people among you think they are wise in this age, let them become ‘fools,’ that they may become wise” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women** (p.785))

### If anyone among you thinks he is wise in this age, let him become a “fool

Here Paul uses **If** to introduce a true possibility. He means that a person might think that **he is wise**, or that person might not think this. He then specifies the consequence if someone does think that **he is wise**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **If** statement by using a relative clause. Alternate translation: “Let whoever among you thinks he is wise in this age become a ‘fool’” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions** (p.653))

### in this age

Alternate translation: “according to the standards of this age”

### let him become a “fool,” that he may become wise

Here Paul commands any **wise** person among the Corinthians to become a **fool**. He does not actually think that doing what he commands makes a person a **fool**, which is why **fool** appears in quotation marks. Rather, he knows that many will call doing what he commands “becoming a **fool**.” To make this clearer, he then says that becoming what many will call a “**fool**” will actually lead to becoming truly **wise**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express Paul’s use of the word **fool** with a form in your language that indicates that Paul is speaking from the perspective of other people. Alternate translation: “let him become a so-called ‘fool,’ that he may become truly wise” (See: **Irony** (p.719))

### that

Here, **that** introduces the goal or purpose for which a person should **become a “fool”**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **that** with a word or phrase that introduces a goal or purpose. Alternate translation: “in order that” (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship** (p.650))

## 1 Corinthians 3:19

### the wisdom of this world

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe what **this world** considers to be **wisdom**. If **the wisdom of this world** would not be understood in your language as **wisdom** from the perspective of **this world**, you could use a different form that makes this meaning clear. Alternate translation: “what this world considers to be wisdom” or “worldly wisdom” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### with God

Here Paul uses the phrase **with God** to identify God’s perspective. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **with God** with a word or phrase that identifies that this is **foolishness** according to how God views the world. Alternate translation: “from God’s perspective” or “in God’s eyes” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### For it is written

In Paul’s culture, **For it is written** is a normal way to introduce a quotation from an important text, in this case, the Old Testament book titled “Job” (See: [Job 5:13](#)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a comparable phrase that indicates that Paul is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: “For it can be read in the Old Testament” or “For the book of Job says” (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

### it is written

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what **is written** rather than the person doing the “writing.” If you must state who does the action, you can express it so that: (1) the scripture or scripture author writes or speaks the words. Alternate translation: “the author of Job has written” (2) God speaks the words. Alternate translation: “God has said” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### it is written, He catches the wise in their craftiness

If you cannot use this form in your language, you could translate these statements as indirect quotes instead of as direct quotes. Alternate translation: “it is written that God catches the wise in their craftiness” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

### catches the wise in their craftiness

Here Paul speaks as if God reaches out and grabs **the wise** as they act in **craftiness**. By speaking in this way, he means that even “crafty” or clever people cannot avoid God when he wishes to “catch” them. God is not deceived, and he can disrupt their clever plans. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **catches** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “interrupts the clever plans of the wise” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### the wise

Paul is using the adjective **wise** 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 adjective with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: “wise people” or “those who think they are wise” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

## craftiness

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **craftiness**, you can express the idea by using by using a phrase such as “crafty plans” or “clever planning.” Alternate translation: “crafty plans” or “clever planning” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

# 1 Corinthians 3:20

## And again

In Paul's culture, **And again** is a normal way to introduce another quotation from an important text that supports the same point. In this case, Paul quotes from the Old Testament book titled "Psalms" (See: [Psalm 94:11](#)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **And again** with a comparable phrase that indicates that Paul is introducing another quotation from an important text. Alternate translation: "In another place in the Old Testament it can be read" or "And the book of Psalms also says" (See: [Quotations and Quote Margins \(p.761\)](#))

## The Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are futile

If you cannot use this form in your language, you could translate these statements as indirect quotes instead of as direct quotes. Alternate translation: "that the Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are futile" (See: [Direct and Indirect Quotations \(p.668\)](#))

## knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are futile

If the form **the reasonings of the wise, that they** would be redundant in your language, you could express the idea without the redundant words. Alternate translation: "knows that the reasonings of the wise are futile" (See: [Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit \(p.726\)](#))

## the reasonings of the wise

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **reasonings**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "reason" or "plan." Alternate translation: "the things that the wise reason" or "the things that the wise plan" (See: [Abstract Nouns \(p.618\)](#))

## of the wise

Paul is using the adjective **wise** 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 adjective with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "of wise people" or "of those who are wise" (See: [Nominal Adjectives \(p.738\)](#))

## they are futile

Alternate translation: "they will come to nothing" or "they are worthless"

## 1 Corinthians 3:21

### let no one boast in men

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should.”

Alternate translation: “no one should boast in men” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### let no one boast in men

The phrase **boast in men** means that a person is boasting “about” humans. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **boast in** with a word or phrase that clarifies that the “boasting” has **men** as its content.

Alternate translation: “let no one boast about men” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### in men

The next verse makes it clear that here Paul specifically has leaders in mind. He wishes to tell the Corinthians that they should not boast about having a specific leader that they follow. If this meaning of **in men** would not be understood in your language, you could include some words that clarify that it refers to following leaders.

Alternate translation: “in men that they follow” or “in men whose group they are part of” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### men

Although **men** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **men** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “in people” or “in men or women” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### all things are yours

Here, **all things are yours** also implies that **boasting in men** is foolish. If the Corinthians have everything, then boasting about following a specific leader does not make sense. All the Corinthians have all the leaders, and much more beyond that (See: [3:22](#)). If your readers would not infer that **all things are yours** implies these conclusions, you could include a phrase that states these conclusions. Alternate translation: “all things are yours, including all leaders” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 3:22

### whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or things present or things

Paul does not want his readers to think that this list tells the Corinthians everything that they have. Rather, he uses the list to give examples. If it would be helpful in your language, you could include a word or phrase that shows that the list gives examples. Alternate translation: “including Paul and Apollos and Cephas and the world and life and death and things present and things to come”

### or life or death

When Paul says that **life** and **death** are theirs, he means that neither **life** nor **death** has control over the Corinthians. Rather, they have control over **life** and **death**. What this means is that they can live their lives without being afraid of what will happen while they are alive or afraid of losing their lives when they die. If it would be helpful in your language, you could add some words that clarify the meaning of **life** and **death**. Alternate translation: “or confidence in life or peace in death” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### or things present or things

Here Paul refers to **things present** because it refers to what was happening at the time when Paul wrote this letter. On the other hand, **things to come** refers to what is going to happen in the future, specifically when Jesus comes back. The **things present** is the way the world works right now. The **things to come** is the way the world will work when Jesus returns. If it would be helpful in your language, you could add some words that clarify the meaning of these phrases. Alternate translation: “or the current order or the order that Jesus will bring” or “or what happens now or what will happen soon” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### All {things are} yours

Here Paul uses the same phrase he used at the end of 3:21: **all {things are} yours**. He repeats the phrase here to explain that the list provides examples of **all things** and also to introduce the point he is about to make in the next verse. Because **all {things are} yours** ends the list and also introduces the next idea, the ULT begins a new sentence with **all {things are} yours**. Use whatever form in your language most clearly identifies a conclusion that also introduces the next statement. Alternate translation: “Thus, all things are yours,” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

## 1 Corinthians 3:23

### you {are} Christ's

Here Paul uses the possessive form to show the Corinthians that they belong to Christ. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form by using a phrase such as "belong to" or a verb such as "has." Alternate translation: "you belong to Christ" (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### Christ {is} God's

Here Paul uses the possessive form to show the Corinthians that **Christ** belongs to who **God** is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form by using a phrase such as "belongs to" or a verb such as "includes." Alternate translation: "Christ belongs to God" or "Christ is part of who God is" (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

# 1 Corinthians 4

## 1 Corinthians 4 General Notes

### Structure and Formatting

Against divisions (1:10–4:15)

- God alone is judge (4:1–5)
- Present weakness (4:6–15)

Against sexual immorality (4:16–6:20)

- Paul's planned visit (4:16–21)

## Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

### Judgment

In 4:3–5, Paul refers to three different judgments. The first judgment is what humans think of each other, including what they think of Paul. The second is Paul's own judgment of himself. The third is God's judgment, which occurs when the Lord returns. Paul argues that the first two judgments are not important and carry no weight. Rather, the only judgment that matters is God's judgment. Therefore, Paul argues that no one should issue a final verdict about anything until God has performed his judgment (4:5). (See: **discern, discernment, distinguish (p.794)**)

### Pride

Paul mentions the Corinthians' pride many times in this chapter. He speaks specifically of being "puffed up" (4:6; 4:18–19), and boasting (4:7). In contrast, Paul describes himself and the other apostles as humble and weak (4:9–13). By making this contrast, Paul wants the Corinthians to rethink their opinions about themselves. If the apostles, the leaders of the church, are weak and humble, they need to think again about whether they really are as great as they think they are.

### Word and power

In 4:19–20, Paul contrasts "word" with "power." This is a common comparison in his culture that contrasts talk and deeds. Anyone can say they are capable of doing something, but only those with "power" can actually do what they claim. Paul introduces this contrast because he is coming to see if those who claim greatness ("word") can do what they claim ("power"). He argues that "power" is what matters more than "word" because God's kingdom is a matter of "power," not "word." It is about action, not just talk. If your language has a standard comparison between "talk" and "deeds," you could use it in these verses.

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Paul as father

In 4:14–15, Paul identifies the Corinthians as his children, which makes him their father. He became their father when he preached the gospel to them. Thus, he is their spiritual father, the one who helped bring them into the Christian life. In the metaphor, Paul does not specify who the mother is, and he does not intend his audience to make an inference as to who it might be. In 4:17, Paul continues this metaphor by claiming Timothy as his spiritual



child. If possible, use words in your language that do not always require biological relationships. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/other/father\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/children\]\]](#))

## The spectacle

In [4:9](#), Paul speaks of the “spectacle” that he and the other apostles participate in. The “spectacle” could be a victory parade in which Paul and the other apostles are prisoners who will be killed, or it could be a gladiatorial performance in an arena in which Paul and the other apostles are destined to die. See the notes on the verse for translation options. Whichever “spectacle” Paul refers to, he is presenting himself and the other apostles as people who are going to be humiliated and killed in public. With this metaphor he continues the theme of Christ working in power through his and others’ weakness. (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## Irony

In [4:8](#), Paul says that the Corinthians are satisfied, rich, and reigning. In the second half of the verse, however, he says that he “wishes” that they were actually reigning. The first part of the verse, then, presents how the Corinthians think about themselves. Paul speaks from their perspective in order to show them that their views are foolish and impossible. (See: **Irony (p.719)**)

## Rhetorical questions

In [4:7](#) and [4:21](#), Paul uses several questions. All the questions in these two verses are not seeking answers that provide information or further knowledge. Rather, all the questions are meant to make the Corinthians think about what they are thinking and doing. For translation options, see the notes on these two verses. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### “Not beyond what is written”

In [4:6](#), Paul quotes a phrase: “Not beyond what is written.” This is not a quote from Scripture, and Paul does not say where the phrase comes from. However, the way he quotes it shows that both he and the Corinthians were familiar with this saying. Most likely, the phrase is a well-known proverb or wise saying that Paul uses to strengthen his argument. For the meaning of the phrase and translation options, see the notes on that verse.

## Paul’s coming

In [4:18–21](#), Paul speaks many times about how he will “come” to them. He intends to visit them again, and he speaks in these verses about what his visit might be like. Use words in your language that refer to someone temporarily visiting someone else.

## 1 Corinthians 4:1

### In this manner let a man regard us: as

If the form **In this manner let a man regard us: as** would be redundant in your language, you could express the idea without the redundant words. Alternate translation: "Let a man regard us as" (See: **Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit (p.726)**)

### let a man regard us

## Connecting Statement:

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as "should." Alternate translation: "a man should regard us" (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### a man

Although **man** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **man** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: "man or woman" or "human" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### a man

Paul uses the word **man** to speak of people in general, not one specific person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **man** with a form that indicates people in general in your language. Alternate translation: "everybody" or "any person" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### us

Here, **us** refers to Paul, Apollos, and others who proclaim the gospel. It does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive 'We' (p.685)**)

### stewards of the mysteries of God

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **stewards** who are in charge of **the mysteries of God**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form by using a verb such as "manage" or "oversee." Alternate translation: "stewards who manage the mysteries of God" or "stewards who oversee the mysteries of God" (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### of the mysteries of God

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **mysteries** that are: (1) revealed by **God**. Alternate translation: "of the mysteries given by God" or "of the mysteries from God" (2) about **God**. Alternate translation: "of the mysteries about God" or "of the mysteries concerning God" (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## 1 Corinthians 4:2

### In this case

Here Paul uses the phrase **In this case** to introduce further information about what it means to be **stewards**. Since he is talking about himself and others who proclaim the gospel as **stewards**, it is important to understand what it is that **stewards** are **required** to do. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection with a word or phrase that introduces more information about a topic. Alternate translation: “Now” or “Speaking of stewards,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### it is required in the stewards that one may be found faithful

While Paul does not directly apply this sentence to himself and others who proclaim the gospel, it is clear that he intends the reader to apply it to him and these others. Paul then means that he and others who proclaim the gospel are required to do so faithfully by God. If this implication would not be understood by your readers, you could use a word or phrase that makes it clear by identifying Paul as one of the stewards. Alternate translation: “it is required in stewards like us that we be found faithful” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p. 626)**)

### it is required

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what **is required** rather than the on person doing the “requiring.” If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague subject or refer to “masters.” Alternate translation: “people require” or “a master requires” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### one may be found faithful

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the person who is **found** rather than the person doing the “finding.” If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague subject or refer to “masters.” Alternate translation: “people find one faithful” or “a master finds one faithful” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### one

Here Paul uses **one** to refer to any of the **stewards**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **one** by using a plural pronoun such as “they.” Alternate translation: “they” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## 1 Corinthians 4:3

### to me it is

Alternate translation: "I consider it" or "from my perspective"

### it is a very small thing

When Paul says that **it is a very small thing** for him to **be examined**, what he means is that their "examination" of him is unimportant to him. Whether they think he has been faithful or not does not matter to him at all. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this phrase with a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "it is no big deal" or "it has no significance" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### I would be examined by you or by a human court

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on Paul, who is **examined**, rather than **you** or the **human court**, who does the "examining." Alternate translation: "you or a human court would examine me" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### a human court

Here, the words translated **a human court** refer to an official legal proceeding where whether Paul was faithful or not could be judged by those in charge. Here, he uses the words primarily to refer to any people who are in charge of this legal proceeding. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **a human court** with a word or phrase that refers to an official meeting to decide whether someone is innocent or guilty or a word or phrase that refers to who is in charge at such a meeting. Alternate translation: "a court of law" or "a human jury" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### For

Here, **For** introduces an even stronger statement about how little Paul cares about being **examined** by humans. He cares so little that he does not even **examine** himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection with a word or phrase that normally introduces a further, stronger statement. Alternate translation: "Indeed," (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

## 1 Corinthians 4:4

### I am aware of nothing against myself

Paul says that he is **aware of nothing against** himself. By this, he means that he does not know about anything that could be used to accuse him. He is not aware of anything he has done wrong. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this phrase with a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "I have a clear conscience" or "I cannot think of any wrong things I have done" (See: **Idiom (p. 710)**)

### I am not justified by this

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on Paul, who is **justified**, rather than what "justifies" him. Alternate translation: "this does not justify me" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### this

Here, **this** refers back to the whole idea that Paul is **aware of nothing against** himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **this** by clarifying that it refers back to the whole previous statement. Alternate translation: "what I am aware of" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### but

Paul uses **but** to introduce a contrast with everyone else who might "examine" Paul (See: [4:3-4](#)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection with a word or phrase that introduces a contrast with several previous statements. Alternate translation: "Instead," (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### the one judging me is the Lord

Alternate translation: "the Lord is the one who judges me"

## 1 Corinthians 4:5

### before the time, until the Lord comes

If the form **before the time, until the Lord comes** contains redundant information that would be unnatural to state in your language, you could express the idea without the redundant words. Alternate translation: “before the Lord comes” or “until the Lord comes” (See: **Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit (p. 726)**)

### comes

Here Paul is speaking about how **the Lord** will “come” back to earth at some point in the future. Use a form in your language that could refer to Jesus’ return to earth. Alternate translation: “returns to the earth” (See: **Go and Come (p.694)**)

### who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness

Here Paul speaks as if **the Lord** will bring a flashlight or torch when he comes, and he will use that torch or flashlight to shine **light** on things that are currently **hidden** in the **darkness**. By speaking in this way, Paul means that **the Lord** will reveal what no person knows right now. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this phrase with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “who will both disclose what people do not know about” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### the hidden things of darkness

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **things** that are **hidden** in **darkness**. If the **hidden things** would not be understood to be in **darkness** in your language, you could express the idea by using a word such “in” or “within.” Alternate translation: “the things hidden in darkness” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### the hidden things of darkness

If your language does not use the abstract noun **darkness**, you can express the idea by using a word or phrase that describes something that cannot be seen because there is no light, such as “in shadow.” Alternate translation: “the hidden things in shadow” or “the things hidden where no light shines” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### the purposes of the hearts

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **purposes** that come from or are created in **the hearts**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind that **the purposes** are located in **the hearts** by using a word such as “from” or “in.” Alternate translation: “the purposes in the hearts” or “the purposes from the hearts” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### the purposes

Here, **purposes** refers to how humans have specific goals in mind and plan ways of attaining those goals. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **purposes** with a word such as “plans” or “intentions.” Alternate translation: “the plans” or “the intentions” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## of the hearts

In Paul's culture, **hearts** are the places where humans think and plan. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state clearly the place where humans think in your culture or express the idea of **hearts**. Alternate translation: "of the minds" or "that humans plan" (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

## the praise from God will come to each one

Here Paul speaks as if **praise** were something that could **come** or travel from **God** to humans. Paul means that **God** is the source of the **praise** that **each one** will receive. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this sentence by translating it so that **God** is the one who gives the **praise**. Alternate translation: "God will give praise to each one" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## the praise from God will come to each one

Here Paul might seem to be saying that every person will receive some **praise** from **God**. However, Paul does not mean that. Instead, he only gives the example of the person who has been faithful to God, not the example of the person who has not been faithful to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express why Paul uses only one example by clarifying that this example is only about those who are faithful, or you could include the opposite example about those who have been unfaithful. Alternate translation: "the praise from God will come to each faithful one" or "the praise and blame from God will come to each one" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 4:6

### these things

Here, **these things** refers back to everything Paul has said about himself and Apollos in 3:4–23. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express what **these things** refers to by clarifying that it refers to what Paul has said about farming and building. Alternate translation: “what I have said about farming and building” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### brothers

Although **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “brothers and sisters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### us

Here, **us** refers to Paul and Apollos only. It does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.685)**)

### you might learn this: Not beyond what is written

If your language does not use this form, you can translate this statement as an indirect quote instead of as a direct quote. Alternate translation: “you might learn not to go beyond what is written” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

### this: Not beyond what is written

Here Paul quotes a short phrase that is not from the Old Testament but that would have been well-known to the Corinthians. The phrase **what is written** could refer to: (1) the Old Testament scriptures. Paul is telling the Corinthians that they should only act in ways that the Old Testament approves. Alternate translation: “Not beyond what the Scriptures say” (2) general principles of life that everyone knows about. Paul is telling the Corinthians that they should only act in ways that are generally approved and accepted. Alternate translation: “Not beyond proper standards” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### is written

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what **is written** rather than focusing on the person doing the “writing.” If you must state who does the action, you can express it so that: (1) the Scriptures or scriptural author writes or speaks the words. Alternate translation: “the authors of Scripture have written” (2) God speaks the words. Alternate translation: “God has said” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### so that

The statement introduced by **so that** could be the purpose for: (1) learning that they should not go **beyond what is written**. Alternate translation: “with the goal that” (2) Paul applying **these things** to himself and Apollos. Alternate translation: “so that, in the end,” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)



## no one would be puffed up

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that the person “puffs” himself or herself up. Alternate translation: “no one would puff himself or herself up” (See: **Active or Passive (p. 621)**)

## of the one & the other

Here, **the one** and **the other** refer to any specific leaders the Corinthians might praise or blame. Perhaps Paul specifically has himself and Apollos in mind, but he intentionally uses words that would include any leader whom the Corinthians could praise or blame. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **the one** and **the other** by using a word or phrase that indicates that Paul is speaking generally of any leaders here. Alternate translation: “of any leader ... any other leader” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## 1 Corinthians 4:7

### **you & do you have & you did & receive? & you received {it}, & do you boast & you did & receive {it}**

In this verse, Paul uses the singular form for **you**. He does this in order to directly address each specific person among the Corinthian believers. In the next verse, he again uses the plural form of “you.” (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.690)**)

### **who makes you superior**

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “no one.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question as an emphatic statement. Alternate translation: “there is no one who makes you superior.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### **what do you have that you did not receive**

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “nothing.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question as an emphatic statement. Alternate translation: “there is nothing that you have that you did not receive.” or “you received everything that you have.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### **And if indeed you received {it}**

Paul is speaking as if “receiving {it}” 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 think that what Paul is saying is not certain, then you could translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: “And since you indeed received it” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.648)**)

### **why do you boast as if you did not receive {it}**

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. Here, there is no answer to the question, since that is exactly Paul’s point. There is no reason for them to **boast**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question as an imperative or a “should” statement. Alternate translation: “do not boast as if you did not receive it.” or “you should not boast as if you did not receive it.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### **ἐλαβες & λαβών**

Here, both uses of **{it}** refer back to **what** the Corinthians **have**. If your language does not use **{it}** to refer to an unstated “thing,” you can use a word or phrase that does refer clearly back to **what** the Corinthians **have**. Alternate translation: “you received everything ... you did ... receive everything” or “you received what you have ... you did ... receive what you have” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## 1 Corinthians 4:8

### **Already you are satisfied! Already you have become rich! You began to reign apart from us**

With these statements, Paul is stating what he thinks the Corinthians would say about themselves. He does not mean that he believes that these things are true. If it would be helpful in your language, you could include some words that clarify that Paul is speaking from the Corinthians's perspective, such as "it is as if" or "you say." Alternate translation: "Already it is as if you are satisfied! Already it is as if you have become rich! It is as if you began to reign apart from us" or "Already you say that you are satisfied! Already you say that you have become rich! You say that you have begun to reign apart from us" (See: **Irony (p.719)**)

### **you are satisfied**

Here Paul speaks as if the Corinthians have had more than enough food to eat and beverages to drink. By this, he means that (they think that) they have so many spiritual blessings that there are no more that they can receive. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of **satisfied** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "you are stuffed with blessings" or "you have every spiritual gift" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### **you have become rich**

Here Paul speaks as if the Corinthians have become wealthy people. He speaks in this way to again emphasize that (they think that) they have more spiritual blessings than they need. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the meaning of **become rich** with a comparable metaphor or plainly. Alternate translation: "you have become fat" or "you have an excess of spiritual gifts" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### **us, & we**

Here, **us** and **we** refer to Paul and others who proclaim the gospel. It does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive 'We' (p.685)**)

## 1 Corinthians 4:9

### For

Here, **For** introduces evidence that Paul and the other apostles are not “reigning” right now. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this connection by using a contrast word such as “rather” or use a word or phrase that indicates that this sentence provides evidence that Paul is not “reigning.” Alternate translation: “Rather,” or “you could tell we are not reigning, since” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### I think

Here, **I think** introduces Paul’s own opinion of what he and other **apostles** are meant to do and experience. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **I think** by using a word or phrase that introduces a person’s interpretation or opinion. Alternate translation: “in my opinion,” or “it seems to me that” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### us & we have become

Here, **we** and **us** refer to Paul and his fellow apostles. It does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.685)**)

### has exhibited us apostles last of all, as sentenced to death

Here Paul uses a metaphor that identifies himself and other apostles as those who receive public humiliation and are put to death. The metaphor itself could: (1) refer to a Roman gladiatorial contest. The apostles, then, would be **exhibited** in the arena as part of the **last** event. As those who are **sentenced to death**, they would then die in this last event. Alternate translation: “has exhibited us apostles in the last event of the gladiatorial games, in which we are destined to die” (2) refer to a victory parade. The apostles, then, would be **exhibited** at the end of the parade, or **last**. As the **last** prisoners, they are **sentenced to death**, and will be killed soon after the parade ends. Alternate translation: “has exhibited us apostles at the end of the victory parade, in the place where prisoners who are sentenced to death march” (3) be a figure of speech that your readers would misunderstand. If this is the case, you could express the idea in nonfigurative language. Alternate translation: “has chosen us apostles to be humiliated, and we are destined to die” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### last of all

Here, **last of all** could identify: (1) the time when the **apostles** are **exhibited**, which would be as the last event held in the arena. Alternate translation: “at the end” (2) the place where the **apostles** are **exhibited**, which would be at the end of the victory parade. Alternate translation: “last in line” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### we have become a spectacle to the world—both to angels and to men

Here Paul speaks as if he and other apostles were part of a gladiatorial game or a theatrical show. He speaks in this way to show that the humiliation and death he and other apostles suffer happens in public, with everyone watching to see what happens. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “we live in full view of the world—both of angels and of men” or “we undergo these things publicly, before the world—both angels and men” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## to the world—both to angels and to men

This structure could mean that: (1) Paul wants to define the **world** as **angels** and **men**. Alternate translation: “to the world, that is, both to angels and to men” (2) Paul is listing three different things. Alternate translation: “to the world, to angels, and to men.” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

## to men

Although **men** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether men or women. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **men** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “to men and women” or “to people” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## 1 Corinthians 4:10

**We {are} fools for Christ's sake, but you {are} wise in Christ. We {are} weak, but you {are} strong. You {are} honored, but we {are} dishonored**

In Paul's language, he did not need to include **{are}**. However, many languages, including English, must add **{are}**, which is why the ULT includes it in brackets. If your language would not use **{are}** here, you could leave it unexpressed. (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

**We {& We {& we**

Here, **we** refers to Paul and the other "apostles." It does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive 'We' (p.685)**)

**We {are} fools & We {are} weak, & we {are} dishonored**

With these statements, Paul identifies what he and the other apostles are like from the perspective of this world. They are **fools**, **weak**, and **dishonored**. Paul does know that from God's perspective they are actually "wise," "strong," and "honored." However, he speaks from the perspective of this world to help the Corinthians change their thinking. Instead of wanting to be **wise**, **strong**, and **honored**, the Corinthians need to realize that following God will instead make them appear to this world as **fools**, **weak**, and **dishonored**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of these statements with a word or phrase that clarifies that they are spoken from a different perspective. Alternate translation: "We seem to be fools ... We seem to be weak ... we seem to be dishonored" or "According to the world, we are fools ... According to the word, we are weak ... according to the world, we are dishonored" (See: **Irony (p.719)**)

**but you {are} wise & but you {are} strong. You {are} honored**

With these statements, Paul identifies what the Corinthians think about themselves. They think they are **wise**, **strong**, and **honored** from the perspective of this world. Paul contrasts what the Corinthians think about themselves and how he and other apostles look from the world's perspective in order to make the Corinthians reconsider what they think about themselves. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these statements with a word or phrase that identifies that they are spoken from the perspective of the Corinthians. Alternate translation: "but you consider yourselves wise ... but you consider yourselves strong ... You consider yourselves honored" (See: **Irony (p.719)**)

**in Christ**

Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in Christ** to describe the union of believers with Christ. In this case, being **in Christ**, or united to Christ, explains: (1) the means by which God has made the Corinthians **wise**. Alternate translation: "by means of your union with Christ" (2) the reason why God has made the Corinthians **wise**. Alternate translation: "because of your union with Christ Jesus" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

**You {are} honored, but we {are} dishonored**

Paul changes the order of the last item in the list, putting **You** in front of **we**. In his culture, this is one way to identify the last item in a list. If it would be helpful in your language, you could match the order that Paul uses for the first two items. Alternate translation: "We are dishonored, but you are honored" (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

## 1 Corinthians 4:11

### Up to the present hour

In Paul's culture, the phrase **Up to this present hour** means that what Paul is about to say has been happening and continues to happen up to the time when he writes this letter. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this phrase with a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "To this very day" "All the time that we serve Christ," (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### we are & hungry

Here, **we** refers to Paul and the other "apostles." It does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive 'We' (p.685)**)

### are poorly clothed

Here, **are poorly clothed** means that the clothing is old and worn and barely covers a person's body. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **are poorly clothed** with a word or phrase that identifies clothing that barely covers a person. Alternate translation: "are clothed in rags" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### and are brutally beaten and

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **we** who are **beaten** rather than focusing on the people doing the "beating." If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a comma before it. Alternate translation: "and people brutally beat us, and we" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### are homeless

Here, **are homeless** means that Paul and the other apostles do not have a permanent residence or a house that they own. It does not mean that they never had a place to stay. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **are homeless** with a word or phrase that indicates that Paul and the other apostles do not have a permanent residence. Alternate translation: "do not own homes" or "are always on the move" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 4:12

### own & we bless; & we endure

Here, **our** and **we** refer to Paul and other “apostles.” They do not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’** (p.685))

### are working hard, working

Here, the words **working hard** and **working** mean basically the same thing. Paul uses both words to emphasize how **hard** he is working. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you can combine these words and indicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “are working very hard” (See: **Doublet** (p.676))

### working with our own hands

In Paul’s culture, the phrase **with our own hands** indicates that Paul and other apostles were doing manual labor. In fact, we know that Paul himself made tents (See: [Acts 18:3](#)), so that is probably the manual labor which he refers to here. If **with our hands** would not refer to manual labor in your language, you could use a comparable idiom or an expression that refers to manual labor. Alternate translation: “doing physically demanding work” (See: **Idiom** (p.710))

### Being reviled, & being persecuted

The phrases **Being reviled** and **being persecuted** identify the situations in which Paul and other apostles **bless** and **endure**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could: (1) include a word such as “when” to indicate that these actions happen at the same time. Alternate translation: “Any time we are reviled ... any time we are persecuted” (2) include a word such as “although” to indicate that these actions are in contrast with each other. Alternate translation: “Although we are reviled ... although we are persecuted” (See: **Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship** (p.660))

### Being reviled

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **reviled** rather than focusing on the people doing the “reviling.” If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: “Others reviling us” (See: **Active or Passive** (p.621))

### Being reviled

Here, **Being reviled** refers to someone abusing another person with words. If that meaning for **Being reviled** would not be obvious in your language, you could use a word or phrase that does refer to using abusive words about another person. Alternate translation: “Being slandered” or “Being attacked verbally” (See: **Translate Unknowns** (p.780))

### we bless

Here Paul does not state whom or what they **bless**. He could mean that they **bless**: (1) the people who “revile” them. Alternate translation: “we bless in return” (2) God, even though they are suffering. Alternate translation: “we bless God anyway” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information** (p.626))



## being persecuted

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **persecuted** rather than the people doing the “persecuting.” If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: “Others persecuting us” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## 1 Corinthians 4:13

### we comfort. We have become

Here, **we** refers to Paul and other “apostles.” It does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’** (p.685))

### being slandered

The phrase **being slandered** identifies the situation in which Paul and other apostles **comfort**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could: (1) include a word such as “when” to indicate that these actions happen at the same time. Alternate translation: “Any time we are slandered” (2) include a word such as “although” to indicate that these actions are in contrast with each other. Alternate translation: “Although we are slandered” (See: **Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship** (p.660))

### being slandered

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **slandered** rather than the people doing the “slandering.” If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: “others slandering us” (See: **Active or Passive** (p.621))

### We have become as the scum of the world, the refuse of all things

Here Paul says that he and other apostles are like **scum** and **refuse**, both of which are words that describe garbage. Paul speaks in this way to show that **the world** considers him and other apostles to be worthless, just like garbage is worthless and should be thrown away. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this simile with a comparable image or plainly. Alternate translation: “We have no value according to the world’s perspective” or “We have become like a heap of garbage” (See: **Simile** (p.770))

### the scum of the world, the refuse of all things

Here Paul uses two different words for garbage. The word **scum** refers to what people throw away after they clean something. The word **refuse** refers to dirt or filth that people wipe or scrub off an object. Paul uses two very similar words in order to emphasize that the world thinks that he and other apostles are like garbage. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you can combine these phrases. Alternate translation: “the filthy scum of all the world” (See: **Doublet** (p.676))

### the scum of the world

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe what **the world** identifies as **scum**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a short phrase to clarify that **scum** is what **the world** thinks he and other apostles are. Alternate translation: “what the world considers scum” (See: **Possession** (p.750))

### of the world

When Paul uses **the world** in this context, he is not referring primarily to everything that God has made. Rather, he uses **the world** to refer to human beings who do not believe in Jesus. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the world** with an expression that refers to human beings in general. Alternate translation: “of human beings” (See: **Synecdoche** (p.773))

## the refuse of all things

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **refuse** that: (1) comes from **all things**. Alternate translation: “the refuse from all things” (2) **all** people consider to be garbage. Alternate translation: “what all people consider to be refuse” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## even until now

Here Paul ends this sentence in a similar way to how he began his sentence in [4:11](#). In Paul’s culture, the phrase **even until now** means that what Paul speaks about has been happening and continues to happen up to the time when he writes this letter. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this phrase with a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “to this very day” “all the time we serve Christ” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 4:14

### I do not write these things as shaming you, but as my beloved children, I correct {you

If your language would not put the negative statement before the positive statement, you could reverse them. Alternate translation: "I correct you as my beloved children. I do not write these things as shaming you" (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### as shaming you

Here, the phrase **as shaming you** introduces what Paul did **not write** to do. If your readers would not understand **as shaming** as a purpose, you could use a word or phrase that does clearly indicate purpose. Alternate translation: "in order to shame you" (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.650)**)

### these things

Here, **these things** refers back to what Paul has already written, focusing on [4:6–13](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **these things** with a word or phrase that refers back to what Paul has just finished writing. Alternate translation: "what I have said about us apostles and you" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### as my beloved children

Here, the phrase **as my beloved children** could introduce: (1) the reason why Paul corrects the Corinthians. Alternate translation: "because you are my beloved children" (2) the way in which he corrects the Corinthians. Alternate translation: "as a father corrects his beloved children, so" (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### my beloved children

Here Paul speaks of the Corinthians as if they were his **beloved children**. He speaks in this way because he is their spiritual father, the one who first preached the good news to them. Also, he loves them in the same way a father loves his own children. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind why Paul calls the Corinthians his **beloved children** with a comparable metaphor or plainly. Alternate translation: "my beloved younger siblings" or "fellow believers whom I love" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 4:15

### if you would have myriads of guardians in Christ

Here Paul is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he is already convinced that the condition is not true. He knows that the Corinthians do not have **myriads of guardians**, but he speaks in this way to emphasize that they have only one spiritual father, no matter how many **guardians** they have. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: “even if you somehow had myriads of guardians in Christ” (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

### myriads of guardians

Here, **myriads of guardians** is an exaggeration that the Corinthians would have understood to mean a large number of **guardians**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **myriads** with a word or phrase that refers to a large number. Alternate translation: “many guardians” or “a large number of guardians” (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

### in Christ

Here Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in Christ** to describe the union of believers with Christ. In this case, being **in Christ**, or united to Christ, could identify: (1) that these **guardians** are helping the Corinthians in their union with Christ. Alternate translation: “who work to unite you more strongly to Christ” (2) the guardians as fellow believers in Jesus. Alternate translation: “who believe in Christ” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### you would} not {have} many fathers

Here Paul omits some words that may be essential in your language to create a complete thought. In English, these words are essential, so they have been included in the ULT in brackets. If you can translate this sentence without these words, you could do so here. Otherwise, you could retain these words as they appear in the ULT. (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### you would} not {have} many fathers

Alternate translation: “you would have only one father”

### you would} not {have} many fathers; for I fathered you in Christ Jesus through the gospel

Here Paul speaks of himself as a “father” to the Corinthian believers. He became their father **through the gospel**, which means that he is their spiritual father. He is the one who preached the **gospel** to them when they became united to **Christ Jesus**, and that makes him the one who **fathered** them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express how Paul speaks about **fathers** by clarifying that Paul refers to “spiritual” **fathers**. Alternate translation: “you would not have many spiritual fathers; for I fathered you spiritually in Christ Jesus through the gospel” (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

### ἐν & Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ

Here Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in Christ Jesus** to describe the union of believers with Christ. In this case, being **in Christ**, or united to Christ, could explain: (1) that the Corinthians became united to Christ when Paul preached the good news to them. Alternate translation: “when you were united to Christ Jesus” (2) Paul is their

father in the Christian family, the family that is united to Christ. Alternate translation: “in the Christian family” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 4:16

### become imitators of me

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **imitators**, you can express the idea by using a verbal such as "imitate." Alternate translation: "imitate me" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 4:17

### Because of this

Here, **this** refers back to what Paul said in the previous verse about imitating him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express what **this** refers to by clarifying that it refers back to the previous verse. Alternate translation: “For that reason” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### I sent

Sometimes, Paul uses the past tense **sent** with reference to the person who carries the letter to its destination. However, Paul later speaks of Timothy visiting them as only a possibility (See: [16:10](#)). Therefore, the visit to which Paul refers here could: (1) have already happened by the time Paul is writing this letter. Timothy would be visiting the Corinthians while Paul is writing this letter, since Paul uses the future tense to refer to how Timothy **will remind** them of Paul’s ways. Alternate translation: “I have sent” (2) be when Timothy brings the letter to them, at which time he **will remind** them of his ways. Alternate translation: “I am sending”

### who is my beloved and faithful child

Here Paul speaks of **Timothy** as if he were his own **child**. This continues the metaphor about Paul as a spiritual father from [4:15](#). Paul is Timothy’s spiritual father, and Paul loves **Timothy** in the way a father loves his child. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or plainly. Alternate translation: “who is my beloved and faithful spiritual child” or “whom I love and who is faithful” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### in the Lord

Here Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in the Lord** to describe the union of believers with Christ. In this case, being **in the Lord**, or united to the Lord, identifies Timothy as someone who faithfully does what he is called to do in his union with **the Lord**. Alternate translation: “in his union with the Lord” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### my ways {that are} in

Here Paul speaks of how he lives and what he does as **my ways**, which refers to the paths that Paul walks on. This way of speaking is related to how Paul has already spoken of behavior as “walking” (See: [3:3](#)). The phrase **my ways** could identify: (1) how Paul thinks and lives. Alternate translation: “the way that I live in” (2) the principles that Paul follows concerning how to think and live. Alternate translation: “the principles that I follow in” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### in Christ Jesus

Here Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in Christ Jesus** to describe the union of believers with Christ. In this case, being **in Christ Jesus**, or united to Christ Jesus, describes Paul’s **ways** as ways that are appropriate for those united to Christ Jesus. Alternate translation: “appropriate in union with Christ Jesus” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### just as I teach

Here Paul does not explicitly state what it is that he is teaching. From the previous words, however, it is clear that he teaches his **ways**, the same **ways** that Timothy will **remind** them about. If you need to clarify what Paul teaches,



you could refer to the **ways** explicitly. Alternate translation: “the same ways that I teach” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## **everywhere in every church**

Here Paul speaks as if Paul has been **everywhere** and visited **every church**. The Corinthians would have understood this to refer to **everywhere** and **every church** that Paul has visited. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **everywhere** and **every church** by clarifying that Paul refers to **every** place and church he has visited. Alternate translation: “everywhere I go and in every church that I visit” (See: **Hyperbole (p. 703)**)

## **everywhere in every church**

Here, the words **everywhere** and **in every church** have very similar meanings. Paul repeats the idea to emphasize that he teaches the **ways** in every church, not just among the Corinthians. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you can combine the two phrases into one. Alternate translation: “in every church” (See: **Doublet (p. 676)**)

## 1 Corinthians 4:18

### Now

Here, **Now** introduces a development in the argument. Paul starts addressing some of the Corinthians who are proud. If **Now** does not introduce a new part of the argument in your language, you could use a word or phrase that does do this. Alternate translation: “Moving on,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### some

The word **some** refers to **some** of the Corinthians. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express what **some** refers to by clarifying that it identifies **some** Corinthian believers. Alternate translation: “some from among you” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### have been puffed up

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that the people “puff” themselves up. Alternate translation: “have puffed themselves up” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### as though

Here Paul speaks of him **not coming** as something that is a possibility. However, he is convinced that this is not true, since he will “come” to them. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: “as if” (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

### I were not coming

Here Paul is speaking about his plan to visit the Corinthians at some point. Use a form in your language that indicates future travel plans to visit someone. Alternate translation: “I were not about to arrive where you live” (See: **Go and Come (p.694)**)

# 1 Corinthians 4:19

## But

Here, **But** introduces a contrast with what some people are thinking in the previous verse, that is, that Paul is not going to visit them. In this verse, he says that he will visit them soon. Use a word or phrase in your language that introduces a strong contrast. Alternate translation: “Despite what they think,” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship** (p.644))

## I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills

If your language would put the **if** statement first, you could rearrange these two clauses. Alternate translation: “if the Lord wills, I will come to you soon” (See: **Information Structure** (p.716))

## I will come to you

Here Paul is speaking about his plan to visit the Corinthians at some point. Use a form in your language that indicates future travel plans to visit someone. Alternate translation: “I will arrive where you live” (See: **Go and Come** (p.694))

## if the Lord wills

Here Paul says that he will only visit the Corinthians **if the Lord wills**. He is not sure whether the Lord will “will” or not. Use a form in your language that indicates a true hypothetical. Alternate translation: “only if the Lord wills, of course” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions** (p.653))

## the word & their power

The contrast between **word** and **power** was well known in Paul’s culture. The contrast states that people can say many things, but they cannot always do what they say they can. If your language has a way to express this contrast between “talk” and “action,” you could use it here. Alternate translation: “the talk ... their deeds” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information** (p.626))

## the word of the ones having been puffed up

Here, **word** represents what someone says in words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **word** with an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: “what these who have been puffed up say” (See: **Metonymy** (p.736))

## of the ones having been puffed up

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that the people “puff” themselves up. Alternate translation: “of these people who have puffed themselves up” (See: **Active or Passive** (p. 621))

## their power

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **power**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as "powerful." Alternate translation: "how powerful they are" or "their powerful deeds" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 4:20

### the kingdom of God {is} not in word but in power

Here Paul speaks as if **the kingdom of God** exists **in**, not **word**, but **power**. By this, he means that **the kingdom of God** does not consist in what people say but in what they do. To say it another way, **word**, or what people say, by itself does not make people part of God's kingdom. Rather, it takes God's **power** working for and through people to make them part of God's kingdom. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "the kingdom of God consists not in word but in power" or "the kingdom of God is not about word but about power" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### in word but in power

The contrast between **word** and **power** was well-known in Paul's culture. The contrast states that people can say many things, but they cannot always do what they say they can do. If your language has a way to express this contrast between "talk" and "action," you could use it here. Alternate translation: "not in talk but in deeds" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### word

Here, **word** represents what someone says in words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **word** with an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: "what people say" (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

### power

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **power**, you can express the idea another way. Alternate translation: "powerful deeds" or "what people powerfully do" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 4:21

### What do you want

Paul asks the Corinthians **What** they **want** because he wants them to realize that their behavior will show him how to respond to them. He does not want the Corinthians to tell him all their desires. Rather, he presents two options in the rest of the verse, and the question **What do you want?** shows the Corinthians that they can choose between those two options by listening to Paul or choosing not to listen to him. If your language does not use a question to express this idea, you can translate the question in statement form. Alternate translation: “Depending on what you do, I will behave towards you in one of two ways.” or “How you respond to me will tell me how to respond to you.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### Shall I come to you with a rod or with love and a spirit of gentleness

Here Paul uses a question to present the two options for how he could act toward the Corinthians when he “comes” to them. He asks a question for the same reason he asked the first question in this verse. He wants them to realize that how they choose to respond to him will dictate how he will act when he visits. If they do not listen to him, he will **come with a rod**. If they do listen, he will come **with love and a spirit of gentleness**. If your language does not use a question to express this idea, you can translate the question in statement form. Alternate translation: “I will either come to you with a rod or with love and a spirit of gentleness.” or “If you do not listen, I will come to you with a rod. If you do listen, I will come to you with love and a spirit of gentleness.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### Shall I come to you

Here Paul is speaking about his plan to visit the Corinthians at some point. Use a form in your language that indicates future travel plans to visit someone. Alternate translation: “Shall I arrive where you live” (See: **Go and Come (p.694)**)

### with a rod

Paul speaks of coming **with a rod** as if he is going to physically beat the Corinthians to teach them to listen to him. This metaphor may continue the way in which he speaks of himself as a “father” in [4:14–15](#), since fathers could punish their children physically **with a rod** if they did not obey. By speaking in this way, Paul thus refers to discipline or punishment, but the discipline he threatens will not be physical. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a word or phrase that would describe discipline or punishment, or you could express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “to punish you” or “with a harsh rebuke” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### with love and

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **love**, you can express the idea by using an adverb such as “lovingly” or a verb such as “love.” Alternate translation: “shall I love you with” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### a spirit of gentleness

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe a **spirit** that is characterized by **gentleness**. If your language would not use the possessive form to express that idea, you could express the idea by translating **gentleness** as an adjective, such as “gentle.” Alternate translation: “a gentle spirit” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## a spirit

Here, **spirit** does not refer to God's Spirit, the Holy Spirit. Rather, it refers to Paul's spirit. In Paul's culture, **as spirit of** something is a way to describe a person's attitude that is characterized by that thing. Here, then, Paul speaks about an attitude that is gentle. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **spirit** with a word such as "attitude" to express the idea. Alternate translation: "an attitude" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## of gentleness

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **gentleness**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as "gentle." Alternate translation: "that is gentle" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

# 1 Corinthians 5

## 1 Corinthians 5 General Notes

### Structure and Formatting

Against sexual immorality (4:16–6:20)

- Paul condemns a sexually immoral man (5:1–5)
- Passover festival metaphor (5:6–8)
- Explanation of previous letter (5:9–13)

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page to make them easier to read. The ULT does this with the quoted words of verse 13. Verse 13 quotes from Deuteronomy 17:7.

## Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

### Sexual immorality

This chapter deals mostly with what Paul calls “sexual immorality” (5:1, 9–11). The word Paul uses for “sexual immorality” is a general term for sexual behavior that is considered improper. The specific type of “sexual immorality” that Paul addresses in this chapter is a man having sex with his step-mother. In some languages, there is a specific word for this. English uses the word “incest.” However, since Paul uses a general term and then brings up a specific situation, you also should use a general term for “sexual immorality” in this chapter. (See: **sexual immorality, immorality, immoral, fornication (p.810)**)

### Judgment

Paul refers to “judgment” or “judging” in 5:3, 12–13. “Judging” refers to deciding whether someone is guilty or innocent. Paul emphasizes in this chapter that Christians should “judge” other Christians in the proper setting (See: 5:3–5). However, they do not need to “judge” people who are not Christians. Paul states that “judging” them is God’s responsibility (5:12–13). (See: **judge, judgment (p.800)**)

### Excommunication

In 5:2, Paul speaks about “removing” the person who committed the sexual sin from among the Corinthians, and he makes a similar command in 5:13. The phrase “hand this man over to Satan” in 5:5 has a similar meaning. Finally, when Paul tells them to “clean out the old yeast” (5:7), this is a metaphor for the same action. Paul is commanding the Corinthians to stop including in their group the man who committed the sexual sin. It is not totally clear whether the man can be accepted back into the group if he stops committing the sin.

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Euphemisms

As is the case in many cultures, sexual behavior is a delicate topic. Paul thus uses euphemisms to avoid sounding crude or nasty. When he says that “someone has his father’s wife” (5:1), this is a delicate way to refer to someone consistently having sex with his father’s wife, whether married or not. He later on calls this behavior “a deed” (5:2) or “such a thing” (5:3). These phrases are ways of referring back to the man having sex with his father’s wife



without using crude words. If your language has similar euphemisms for delicately referring to sexual behavior, you could use them here. (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

## Passover metaphor

In 5:6–8, Paul speaks of “yeast” and “Passover.” Passover was Jewish festival in which the people celebrated how God delivered them from serving as slaves in Egypt. The Israelites sacrificed lambs and spread the blood on their doors, and they ate bread without yeast in it because they would have to leave quickly, before the bread could rise. Then, God sent a destroying angel who killed the firstborn child in every house that did not have blood on its door. When this happened, the ruler of Egypt told the Israelites to leave immediately. you could read about these events in [Exodus 12](#). Later generations of Israelites celebrated this day by removing the yeast from their houses and by sacrificing a lamb. Paul refers to this festival in these verses. He uses the festival of Passover as a metaphor to encourage the Corinthians to remove sinful people (“yeast”) from their group (“their house”). There is even a “Passover lamb,” who is Jesus himself. Since this metaphor is drawn from the Old Testament, you should preserve it in your translation. If necessary you could include a footnote that gives some extra information, or you could refer your readers to Exodus 12 if they have access to the book of Exodus. (See: [\[\[rc://tw/dict/bible/other/yeast\]\]](#), [\[\[rc://tw/dict/bible/kt/passover\]\]](#), and **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## Rhetorical questions

In 5:6 and 5:12, Paul uses rhetorical questions. He is not asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to provide him with information. Rather, he is asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to think about how they are acting and what they are thinking. The questions encourage them to think along with Paul. For ways to translate these questions, look for the notes on each verse that includes these kinds of questions. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## Present in spirit

In 5:3–4, Paul speaks of being with the Corinthians “in spirit.” While this could be a reference to the Holy Spirit, who would connect Paul with the Corinthians, more likely Paul is referring to his own “spirit,” which refers to the aspect of Paul that can connect with the Corinthians even when he is not physically present. When he says that he is with them “in spirit,” that means that he is thinking about them and that they should act as they would if Paul was physically present. You could either use a comparable idiom in your language or explain in some other way what “spirit” means in these verses. (See: **spirit, wind, breath (p.811)**)

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Structure of 5:3–5

In 5:3–5, Paul uses a long and complicated sentence structure. In 5:3, he describes how he has “passed judgment” as if he were present. In 5:5, he tells them what the response to that judgment should be: “hand this man over to Satan.” In 5:4, then, he describes the situation in which they should hand the man over: they should be gathered together and acting with the authority of both Paul and Jesus. Finally, in 5:4, “in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” could describe how Paul has “passed judgment” in 5:3, or it could describe how the Corinthians have “assembled” in 5:4. In order to translate these verses clearly, you may need to rearrange some clauses or add explanatory information that clarifies what Paul is saying. For more details and translation options, see the notes on those verses.

### Structure of 5:12–13

In 5:12–13, Paul alternates between talking about judging “those outside” and “those inside.” If alternating between these two ideas would be confusing in your language, you could rearrange the clauses so that the verses

deal with “those outside” first and then “those inside.” Here is an example of how you could do this: “For what to me to judge those outside? God will judge those outside. But do you not judge those inside? “Remove the evil from among yourselves.”

## 1 Corinthians 5:1

### It is actually reported {that

Here, **actually** could: (1) emphasize that something is really true. Alternate translation: “It is really reported that” (2) emphasize that many people know about what is going on in the Corinthian church. Alternate translation: “It is everywhere reported that” or “It is reported by many people that” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### It is actually reported {that

Here Paul intentionally uses a passive form to avoid stating who told him about the **sexual immorality**. If your language does not use this passive form, you can express the idea by making Paul the subject of a verb such as “learn” or by using a form that avoids naming a person. Alternate translation: “Some people have actually reported to me that” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### there is} sexual immorality among you, and such immorality which {is} not even among the Gentiles

Here Paul repeats **sexual immorality** in order to emphasize how shocked and upset he is that people among the Corinthians are committing sexual sins. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you can combine these two statements and express Paul’s shock in another way. Alternate translation: “there is sexual immorality among you that even the Gentiles condemn” or “you overlook flagrant sexual immorality, a kind which even the Gentiles do not accept” (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)

### which {is} not even among the Gentiles

While Paul does not explicitly say why this **immorality** is not **among the Gentiles**, the Corinthians would have understood him to mean that the **Gentiles** do not permit such behavior and prohibit it by law or social practice. If this information would not be implied in your language, you could include a word or phrase that indicates that Paul refers to the attitude of **Gentiles** towards this kind of **sexual immorality**. Alternate translation: “which even the Gentiles avoid” or “which even the Gentiles find shocking” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### the Gentiles

Here Paul does not use **the Gentiles** primarily to refer to non-Jews, since there were non-Jewish members of the church. Rather, Paul uses **the Gentiles** to describe anyone who does not worship the true God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the Gentiles** with a word or phrase that identifies those who do not worship or serve God. Alternate translation: “the pagans” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### someone has his father’s wife

In Paul’s culture, if man **has** a woman, it refers to a long-term sexual relationship. Often this would be a marriage, but it could also be a sexual relationship without marriage. Here, it is not clear whether the person (**someone**) marries **his father’s wife** or not. What is clear is that he is in a long-term sexual relationship with **his father’s wife**. If possible use a word or phrase that indicates this kind of general relationship. Alternate translation: “someone is living with his father’s wife” or “someone is sleeping with his father’s wife” (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

## his father's wife

Here, **his father's wife** identifies a woman who is married to a man's father but who is not the man's mother. If your language has a specific word for this relationship, you could use it here. If your language does not have a word for this relationship, you can describe the relationship with a phrase, much like the ULT does. Alternate translation: "his father's wife who is not his mother" (See: **Kinship (p.722)**)

## 1 Corinthians 5:2

### you are puffed up

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that **you** “puff” yourselves up. Alternate translation: “you puff yourselves up” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### so that the one having done this deed might be removed

Here, **so that** could introduce: (1) a purpose for the “mourning.” Alternate translation: “in order that the one who did this deed might be removed (2) a command. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a period before it. Alternate translation: “The one who did this deed should be removed” (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.650)**)

### so that the one having done this deed might be removed from among you

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the person who is **removed** rather than the people doing the “removing.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “you” do it. Alternate translation: “so that you remove the one who did this deed from among you” (See: **Active or Passive (p. 621)**)

### the one having done this deed

In Paul’s culture, it was normal to use both **done** and **deed** to refer to performing an act. If your language would not use both **done** and **deed** here, you could express the idea with just one of these two words. Alternate translation: “the one who did this” or “the one who carried out this deed” (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)

### might be removed from among you

When someone is **removed from among** a group, it means that he or she is no longer part of the group. If your language has a specific word or phrase to describe expelling a member of a group, you could use it here. Alternate translation: “might be banned from your group” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 5:3

### For

Here, the word **For** introduces the reason why the man who has committed the sexual sin should be “removed from among you” (5:2). The reason is because Paul has already **passed judgment** on him, and so the Corinthians should be enacting the punishment. Use a word or phrase in your language that introduces a reason. Alternate translation: “He should be removed since” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### being absent in the body

In Paul’s culture, **being absent in body** is a figurative way to speak about not being present in person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **being absent in the body** with a comparable expression or translate the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “not being there with you” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### being present in the spirit

In Paul’s culture, **being present in spirit** is a figurative way to speak of thinking about and caring about that person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **being present in spirit** with a comparable metaphor or plainly. Alternate translation: “still being connected to you” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### in the spirit

Here, **spirit** could refer to: (1) Paul’s **spirit**, which would be the part of him that connects with the Corinthians across a distance. Alternate translation: “in my spirit” (2) the Holy Spirit, which connects Paul with the Corinthians, even though they are not physically together. Alternate translation: “in God’s Spirit” or “by the power of God’s Spirit”

### have already passed judgment on the one having done such a thing

Here Paul has **already passed judgment**, which means that he has declared the man to be guilty. Two verses later (5:4), Paul specifies what the punishment that results from the **judgment** should be: the man should be “handed over to Satan.” Here, then, use a word or phrase that indicates a decision about guilt, not a punishment. Alternate translation: “have already judged the one who did such a thing to be guilty”

### have already passed judgment on

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **judgment**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “judge” instead of **passed judgment on**. Alternate translation: “have already judged” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### the one having done such a thing

Paul does not wish to repeat the ugly details of the man having sex with his stepmother. Instead, he uses general words to refer back to what he has already said about the man. If possible, preserve how Paul avoids repeating the details of the sin in your translation. You could use vague language like Paul does, or you could use a similar euphemism. Alternate translation: “the man who committed this sin” (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

## as if being present

Here Paul makes a conditional statement that might sound hypothetical but that he knows is not true. He knows that he is not present with them, but he wants to emphasize that his **judgment** is just as effective **as if** he were **present**. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: “even though I am absent” (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

## 1 Corinthians 5:4

### You and my spirit, having been assembled

The phrase **You and my spirit, having been assembled** gives the time and situation in which the Corinthians should “hand this man over to Satan” (5:5). If this phrase would not indicate timing or a situation in your language, you could use a word or phrase that does indicate time or situation. Alternate translation: “One of the times when you and my spirit have been assembled” (See: **Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship (p.660)**)

### having been assembled

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the things that are **assembled** rather than what does the “assembling.” you can express the idea in active form by using a verb such as “gather together” or “meet.” Alternate translation: “meeting together” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

Acting **in the name of** a person means representing that person. Representatives, those who do anything **in the name of** someone else, act with the authority of the people they represent. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in the name of** with a comparable idiom for representing someone or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “as representatives of our Lord Jesus Christ” or “as people who act for our Lord Jesus Christ” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### You and my spirit, having been assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

The phrase **in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ** could modify: (1) how they have **been assembled**. Alternate translation: “You and my spirit, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ having been assembled” (2) how Paul has “passed judgment” in 5:3. Alternate translation: “I passed this judgment in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. You and my spirit, having been assembled,” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### and my spirit

Just as in 5:3, Paul speaks of his “spirit.” Just as there, Paul’s **spirit** being **assembled** with them is a figurative way to speak of how Paul thinks about and cares about them. Here, it has the additional implication that what they do when **assembled** carries Paul’s own authority. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **my spirit** with a comparable metaphor or plainly. Alternate translation: “and my thoughts” or “with my authority” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### my spirit

Here, **my spirit** could refer to: (1) Paul’s **spirit**, which would be the part of him that connects with the Corinthians across a distance. Alternate translation: “my own spirit” (2) the Holy Spirit, which connects Paul with the Corinthians, even though they are not physically together. Alternate translation: “my share of God’s Spirit” or “I, by the power of God’s Spirit”



## with the power of our Lord Jesus

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **power**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “empower” or “authorize.” Alternate translation: “as people who are empowered by our Lord Jesus” or “as people whom our Lord Jesus has empowered” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 5:5

### hand this man over

The phrase **hand this man over** identifies the punishment that goes with the verdict that Paul reached when he “judged” him (5:3). If possible, express **hand this man over** as the result or the implication of Paul having “already judged” him. Alternate translation: “since I have declared this man guilty, hand him over” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### hand this man over to Satan

The phrase **hand** someone **over to** someone else refers to transferring a person from one authority to another. Here, then, Paul wants the Corinthians to transfer **this man** from under the authority of the church to under the authority of **Satan**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this figure of speech with a comparable idiom or plainly. Alternate translation: “turn this man over to Satan” or “put this man under Satan’s authority” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### for the destruction of the flesh

Here, **for** introduces the result of “handing this man over to Satan.” If **for** would not indicate result in your language, use a word or phrase that does introduce a result. Alternate translation: “with the result that his flesh is destroyed” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### for the destruction of the flesh

This phrase could be a reference to the **destruction** of: (1) the parts of the **man** that are weak and sinful, which would indicate cleansing or sanctification. Alternate translation: “so that he will not continue to live sinfully” (2) the man’s physical body, which would mean either by physical suffering or death. Alternate translation: “so that he suffers in his body” or “for the death of his body” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### for the destruction of the flesh

Here Paul uses the possessive form to clarify that **destruction** will happen to **the flesh**. If your language does not use this form to express that idea, you can translate **destruction** with a verb such as “destroy.” Alternate translation: “to destroy the flesh” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### for the destruction of the flesh

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **destruction**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “destroy.” Alternate translation: “to destroy the flesh” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### so that

While **for the destruction of the flesh** is the result of the “handing over,” the words **so that** introduce the purpose of the “handing over.” Use a word or phrase in your language that introduces a purpose. Alternate translation: “in order that” or “with the goal that” (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.650)**)

## his spirit may be saved

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **saved** rather than focusing on the person doing the “saving.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God may save his spirit” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## his spirit

Here, **spirit** refers to the parts of **this man** that are not **flesh**. Therefore, the **spirit** is not just the nonphysical part of the person but rather a reference to the whole person apart from his or her sins and weaknesses. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that meaning of **spirit** with a word or phrase that refers to the salvation of the whole person. Alternate translation: “he” or “his soul” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## in the day of the Lord

Here Paul uses the words translated **day of the Lord** in the same way the Old Testament uses them: to refer to an event in which God saves his people and punishes his enemies. Paul specifically refers to the event in which Jesus returns to judge everyone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **day of the Lord** by including more words that clarify what Paul means by **day**. Alternate translation: “on the day when the Lord returns” or “when the Lord comes to judge everyone” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 5:6

### Your boasting {is} not good

Alternate translation: "Your boasting is bad"

### a little yeast leavens the whole loaf

In 5:6–8, Paul speaks about **yeast** and "dough." Verses 7–8 clarify that Paul is thinking about the "Passover." In this Jewish festival, people would remove all the **yeast** from their houses and only bake dough that was not fermented ("unleavened bread"). See [Exodus 12:1–28](#). In this verse, then, the **yeast** does not represent a good thing. Rather, it is supposed to be removed from the house, but any **yeast** that is left will still "leaven" a whole loaf. If your language would not consider **yeast** to be a bad thing when mixed into dough, you could include a word or phrase that indicates that the **yeast** is not wanted in the dough. Alternate translation: "a little yeast leavens a whole loaf that is meant to be unleavened" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information \(p.626\)](#))

### Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole loaf

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information or for agreement or disagreement. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing by reminding them of something that they should already know. The question assumes that the answer is "yes." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with an emphatic statement. Alternate translation: "You know that a little yeast leavens the whole loaf" (See: [Rhetorical Question \(p.766\)](#))

### a little yeast leavens the whole loaf

Here, **yeast** refers to anything that is added to bread dough to make it ferment and rise. This could be **yeast** itself or dough that is already fermented ("leaven"). Paul here uses this metaphor to indicate that, just like even a little bit of **yeast** will "leaven" **the whole loaf**, so a little bit of sin, or one person who sins, will affect the whole church. Therefore, the Corinthians believers should not "boast," since the one person who is sinning among them denigrates the whole church. Since this metaphor is based on material from the Old Testament, you should try to preserve the form in your language. You could use a simile, or if necessary, you could use a comparable metaphor. Alternate translation: "sin is like yeast: a little yeast leavens the whole loaf" or "one bad apple spoils the whole barrel" (See: [Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors \(p.630\)](#))

## 1 Corinthians 5:7

**ἐκκαθάρατε τὴν παλαιὰν ζύμην, ἵνα ᾦτε νέον φύραμα, καθὼς ἐστε ἄζυμοι. καὶ γὰρ τὸ Πάσχα ἡμῶν ἐτύθη, Χριστός**

Just as in 5:6 and 5:8, Paul is thinking about the Jewish festival of **Passover**. During this festival, people would remove all the **yeast** from their houses and only bake **unleavened bread**, that is, bread that is not fermented. Additionally, a **lamb** would be sacrificed and eaten. The **lamb** would remind the people about how God had delivered them from slavery in the land of Egypt. See [Exodus 12:1–28](#). If your readers would not infer this information, you could include a footnote that explains **Passover** and how it relates to **yeast** and a **Lamb**. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### **Clean out the old yeast so that you may be new dough, just as you are unleavened bread**

Here Paul speaks about how Jews would **clean out the old yeast** during the festival of Passover and only bake **unleavened bread**. Just like in 5:6, he compares sin to **yeast**. By speaking in this way, he urges the Corinthians to **clean out** the person who is sinning. Then, they will be like **new dough**, like **unleavened bread**, that is, without sin. Since this metaphor is based on material from the Old Testament, you should try to preserve the form in your language. You could use a simile, or if necessary, you could use a comparable metaphor. Alternate translation: “Clean out the old yeast, that is, sin, so that you may be new dough, just as you are unleavened bread” or “Clean out the bad apple so that you may be a fresh barrel, just as you are fresh apples” (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

### **just as you are unleavened bread**

When Paul says that they **are unleavened bread**, this means that they are in danger of encountering the **yeast**, that is, sin. This is why they must **clean out the old yeast**. If they remain **unleavened** by avoiding contact with **old yeast**, they will be **new dough**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **you are unleavened bread** by clarifying that Paul calls them this because it shows that **yeast** is a threat to them. Alternate translation: “for you are currently unleavened bread” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### **For**

Here Paul uses **For** to introduce the reason why his metaphor about **yeast** is appropriate. **Christ** is like the **Passover lamb**. Since Christ has **been sacrificed** like that **lamb**, the Corinthians are supposed to live as if it is **Passover**. This means avoiding sin in their group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make it more explicit. Alternate translation: “You should act like people observing Passover because” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### **Christ, our Passover lamb, has also been sacrificed**

When God delivered the Jewish people from Egypt, he required them to sacrifice a lamb and spread its blood on their doors. God did not harm anyone who had the blood on their door, but the firstborn son of anyone who did not have the blood on their door died. Because of this, the **lamb** that was sacrificed at **Passover** represented God delivering the Jewish people by accepting the **lamb's** death in place of the firstborn son. See [Exodus 12:1–28](#). The implication here is that **Christ's** death also functioned in this way, in place of those whom he delivers. If it would be helpful in your language, you could add a footnote explaining the function of the **lamb** at **Passover**. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## Christ, our Passover lamb, has also been sacrificed

Here Paul compares **Christ** to the **Passover lamb**, since both died to save someone else. Since this metaphor is based on material from the Old Testament, you should try to preserve the form in your language, or you could use a simile. Alternate translation: “Christ, who is like our Passover lamb, has also been sacrificed” (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

## Christ, our Passover lamb, has also been sacrificed

Paul intentionally does not state who **sacrificed** the **Passover lamb**, who is **Christ**. If your language does not use this passive form, you can express the idea in another way. If possible, do not state who **sacrificed Christ**. Alternate translation: “Christ, our Passover lamb, has also died as a sacrifice” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## 1 Corinthians 5:8

**So then, we should celebrate the festival, not with old yeast, nor with yeast of evil and wickedness, but with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth**

Just as in 5:6–7, here Paul speaks about **yeast** and “dough.” In this Jewish **festival** of Passover, people would remove all the **yeast** from their houses and only bake dough that was not fermented (**unleavened bread**). See Exodus 12:1–28. Here, then, the **yeast** is what is meant to be removed, and the **unleavened bread** is what is meant to be eaten. If your readers would not understand this background, you could include a footnote that gives extra information. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

**So then, we should celebrate the festival, not with old yeast, nor with yeast of evil and wickedness, but with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth**

Here Paul finishes the metaphor about **yeast** and Passover that he began in 5:6. Paul encourages the Corinthians to **celebrate the festival** by getting rid of the **old yeast**. He then identifies that the **yeast** stands for **evil and wickedness**, while the **unleavened bread** that they are supposed to eat stands for **sincerity and truth**. With this metaphor Paul exhorts the Corinthians to expel from their group the man who has sinned, just as one would remove yeast from one's house during the **festival**. Since this metaphor is based on material from the Old Testament, you should try to preserve the form in your language. You could use a simile, or you could include a footnote that explains the metaphor. Alternate translation: “So then, we should be like those who celebrate the festival, not with old yeast, nor with yeast of evil and wickedness, but with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

**we should celebrate the festival**

Because of what Paul has said in 5:7, this **festival** must be the festival connected with Passover. If your readers would not understand this from the context, you could include the name “Passover” here. Alternate translation: “we might celebrate the Passover festival” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

**not with old yeast, nor with yeast of evil and wickedness**

Here Paul repeats **yeast** in order to define what he means by **old yeast**. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you can combine the two phrases and introduce the definition in another way. Alternate translation: “not with old yeast, which is evil and wickedness” (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)

**yeast of evil and wickedness**

Here Paul uses the possessive form to identify the **yeast** as **evil and wickedness**. If your language does not use this form for that idea, you can express the idea by using a word or phrase that renames or identifies something. Alternate translation: “yeast, that is, evil and wickedness” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

**of evil and wickedness**

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **evil** and **wickedness**, you can express the ideas by using adjectives that describe actions or “behavior.” Alternate translation: “of evil and wicked behavior” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## of evil and wickedness

Here, the words **evil** and **wickedness** mean almost the same thing. The word **evil** refers to something that is morally “bad,” while the word **wickedness** refers to something that is characterized by vice. If your language does not have two words that are this similar, you can express the idea with one word. Alternate translation: “of evil” (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)

## unleavened bread of sincerity and truth

Here Paul uses the possessive from to identify the **unleavened bread** as **sincerity and truth**. If your language does not use this form for that idea, you can express the idea by using a word or phrase that renames or identifies something. Alternate translation: “unleavened bread, that is, sincerity and truth” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## of sincerity and truth

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **sincerity** and **truth**, you can express the ideas by using adjectives that describe actions or behaviors. Alternate translation: “of sincere and true behavior” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## of sincerity

The word **sincerity** identifies actions done with only one intention, done without deceit. The people doing those actions do not say or pretend one thing while doing something else. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this word by using a word or phrase that identifies something that is done honestly and with one goal in mind. Alternate translation: “of integrity” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)



## 1 Corinthians 5:9

### I wrote to you in my letter

Here Paul refers to a letter that he wrote and sent to the Corinthians before he began this letter. The phrase does not refer to this letter but to a previous letter. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **I wrote to you in my letter** by including a word that clarifies that **my letter** is one that Paul has already sent. Alternate translation: "I already wrote to you in my previous letter" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p. 626)**)

### to associate with

Here, **to associate with** often refers to two groups of people meeting together. The idea here is that **sexually immoral people** should not be a part of the Corinthians' group. If **to associate with** does not have this meaning in your language, you could express the idea by using a word that refers to including people in one's group. Alternate translation: "to consistently meet with" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 5:10

### by no means

Paul uses **by no means** to strongly introduce a clarification about what he wrote to them previously (5:9). When he told them “not to associate with sexually immoral people,” he did not mean **people of this world**. Rather, as the next verse clarifies, he meant fellow believers. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **by no means** with a word or phrase that introduces a qualification to a previous statement. Alternate translation: “not that you should not associate at all with” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### of this world

The phrase **of this world** clarifies that the **immoral people** are not part of the church. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this phrase with a comparable phrase that identifies the **immoral people** as unbelievers. Alternate translation: “who do not believe” or “who are not part of the church” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### the greedy

Paul is using the adjective **greedy** as a noun in order to identify 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: “greedy people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### swindlers

Here, **swindlers** identifies people who take money from others dishonestly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **swindlers** with a word that refers to such people. Alternate translation: “thieves” or “embezzlers” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### since then you would need to go out from the world

Here Paul draws the logical conclusion about what he did not mean in his letter. Thus, while Paul does not think that the basis for the exhortation is true, he does think that this is the logical result of that basis. He gives this exhortation to show that it is absurd, since they cannot **go out from the world**. Therefore, the basis for this exhortation is also absurd. If **since then** in your language would not introduce a result from a reason that Paul thinks is not true, you could use a word or phrase that would introduce such an idea. Alternate translation: “If that was what I had meant, then you would need to go out from the world” (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

### to go out from the world

This phrase is not a euphemism for dying. Instead, Paul is saying that the Corinthians would need to travel off earth to get away from the **immoral people of this world**. In his culture and time, this was impossible. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **go out from the world** with a word or phrase that refers to traveling off earth. Alternate translation: “to leave earth” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 5:11

### But now I wrote to you

Here Paul could be speaking about: (1) the letter he is writing **now**, in contrast to the letter he already wrote (5:9). He uses the past tense **wrote** because the “writing” will be in the past when the letter is read to the Corinthians. Use the tense that would be appropriate in your language for this situation. Alternate translation: “But now I have written to you” (2) the letter he already wrote, but he wants them to understand it correctly **now**. Alternate translation: “But what I really wrote to you was”

### to associate with

Here, **to associate with** often refers to two groups of people meeting together. The idea here is that **sexually immoral** people who claim to belong to the Corinthians’ group should not be considered part of the group. If **to associate with** does not have this meaning in your language, you could express the idea by using a word that refers to including people in one’s group. Alternate translation: “to consistently meet with” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### any so-called brother

Here, **who is called a brother** distinguishes **anyone** from the people mentioned in the last verse. Paul did not require the Corinthians **not to associate** with those people, but he does require them **not to associate** with any such person **who is called a brother**. Use a construction in your language that indicates that Paul is distinguishing, not informing. Alternate translation: “any person called a brother” (See: **Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding (p.670)**)

### so-called

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **called** rather than the person doing the “calling.” If you must state who does the action, you can use “you” or “the brother” as the subject. Alternate translation: “who calls himself” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### brother

Although **brother** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to a man or a woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brother** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “a brother or a sister” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### verbally abusive

Here, **verbally abusive** describes someone who shows anger by using vicious words to attack others. Use a word in your language that describes this kind of person. Alternate translation: “vocally vicious” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### a swindler

Here, **swindler** identifies a person who takes money from others dishonestly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **swindler** with a word that refers to such people. Alternate translation: “a thief” or “an embezzler” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## Do not even eat with such a person

In Paul's culture, to **eat with** someone meant that you accepted them into your social group. Here, he wants the Corinthians not to accept such people into their group. If "eating with" someone does not signify accepting them in your culture, you may need to make that idea explicit. Alternate translation: "Do not even include such a person in your group's meals" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 5:12

### For

Here, **For** introduces further reasons why Paul wants the Corinthians to focus on “judging” fellow believers but not **those outside**. These reasons continue into the next verse (5:13). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection with a word or phrase that would introduce further reasons. Alternate translation: “Further,” or “For more proof,” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### what to me to judge the ones outside

Here Paul asks **what to me to judge those outside**, but he is not really asking for information. Rather, the question assumes that the answer is “nothing” or “it does not matter to me,” and Paul uses the question to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negative statement. Alternate translation: “it is nothing to me to judge those outside” or “it is not my business to judge those outside” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### what to me

Here Paul omits some words that may be required in your language to make a full sentence. You could supply words such as “is it” or “does it matter” to complete the thought. Alternate translation: “what is it to me” or “what does it matter to me” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### to me

Here Paul speaks of himself only, but he wants the Corinthians to have the same opinion that he has. If **to me** would cause your readers to misunderstand this point, you could include the Corinthians in this question as well. Alternate translation: “to us” or “to you and me” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.687)**)

### the ones outside? & the ones inside

The phrase **the ones outside** identifies people who do not belong to the group of believers in Corinth. The phrase **the ones inside** identifies the opposite: people who do belong to the group of believers in Corinth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these phrases with words or phrases that refer to people who belong to and do not belong to a specific group. Alternate translation: “the outsiders ... the insiders” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### Do you not judge the ones inside

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “yes.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong affirmation or statement of obligation. Alternate translation: “But you should judge those inside” or “You do indeed judge those inside” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## 1 Corinthians 5:13

### judges

In Paul's language, **judges** and "will judge" look and sound very similar. While some early and important manuscripts have "will judge" here, some early and important manuscripts have **judges**. Unless there is a good reason to translate "will judge," it is best to follow the ULT here. (See: **Textual Variants (p.775)**)

### judges

Here, **judges** makes a general statement about what God does. The present tense does not mean that God is currently passing final judgment on **those outside** and will not do so in the future. Rather, Paul has the final judgment in mind. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the present tense of **judges** with the future tense here. Alternate translation: "will judge" (See: **Predictive Past (p.754)**)

### the ones outside

The phrase **the ones outside** identifies people who do not belong to the group of believers in Corinth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this phrase with a word or phrase that refers to people who do not belong to a specific group. Alternate translation: "the outsiders" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### Remove the evil from among yourselves

Here Paul quotes a command that appears many times in the Old Testament book named Deuteronomy (See: [Deuteronomy 13:5](#); [17:7](#), [17:12](#); [19:19](#); [21:21](#); [22:21–22](#), [22:24](#); [24:7](#)). If your readers would not recognize this command as a quotation, you could introduce it in the same way that you have already introduced quotations from the Old Testament (See: [1:31](#)). Alternate translation: "As it can be read in the Old Testament, 'Remove the evil from among yourselves'" or "According to the book of Deuteronomy, 'Remove the evil from among yourselves'" (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

### Remove the evil from among yourselves

If you cannot use this form in your language, you could translate this command as an indirect quote instead of as a direct quote. Alternate translation: "We read in Scripture that you should remove the evil from among yourselves" (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

### the evil

Paul is using the adjective **evil** 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: "people who are evil" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

# 1 Corinthians 6

## 1 Corinthians 6 General Notes

### Structure and Formatting

Against sexual immorality (4:16–6:20)

- Against public lawsuits (6:1–8)
- Sins and salvation (6:9–11)
- Flee from sexual immorality (6:12–20)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

#### Lawsuits

In [6:1–8](#), Paul speaks about believers taking other believers to court in lawsuits. Paul critiques them for taking their disputes before unbelievers rather than settling them within the church. By the end of the section, Paul says that lawsuits themselves are a “complete defeat” of believers. Paul’s point is that believers will judge angels and the world, so they are quite able to resolve disputes within the church. Therefore, believers should never take other believers to court. In this section, use words and language that describe legal matters in your language. (See: **judge, judgment (p.800)**)

#### Sexual immorality

In [6:12–20](#), Paul discusses “sexual immorality.” This phrase refers generally to any kind of improper sexual activity, and Paul does speak generally in this section. He mentions particularly having sex with prostitutes, but the commands he gives apply to all kinds of sexual activity. The Corinthians seemed to think that they could do whatever they wanted with their bodies, including having sex with anyone. Paul responds that their bodies are united to Christ, and any sexual activity they participate in needs to fit with their union with Christ. Use general words for improper sexual activity in this section. (See: **sexual immorality, immorality, immoral, fornication (p.810)**)

#### Redemption

In [6:20](#), Paul tells the Corinthians that they have been “bought with a price.” He does not state what the price is or whom God bought the Corinthians from. However, it is clear that Paul is speaking about what we call “redemption” here. Paul thinks of the Corinthians as slaves up for sale, and God buys them from their previous owner by paying a price. The previous owner can be understood as sin, death, and evil powers, while the price is Jesus the Son dying for believers. You should not include all these implications in your translation, but you should use words that can be interpreted in this way. (See: **redeem, redeemer, redemption (p.809)**)

### Translation Issues in This Chapter

#### “Members” of Christ or of a prostitute

In [6:15–17](#), Paul speaks of a person’s connection to Christ and to a prostitute with the language of “members” and “joining.” When he refers to “members,” he is speaking as if the believer were either a body part of Christ or a body part of a prostitute. He shows how bad it is to be “joined” with a prostitute by speaking as if someone cut a body

part off of Christ and attached it to a prostitute instead. That is how closely a person is joined either to Christ or to a prostitute. If possible, preserve the body parts language here. (See: **member, body parts (p.806)**)

## Body as temple

In 6:19, Paul speaks as if believers' bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes he speaks as if the church as a whole is a temple, but here he means that individual believers are all temples. A temple is where a god is specially present, so Paul means that the Holy Spirit is specially present in believers' bodies. If possible, preserve this metaphor, since it connects to themes throughout the entire Bible. (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## Rhetorical questions

In 6:1–7, 9, 15–16, 19, Paul uses rhetorical questions. He is not asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to provide him with information. Rather, he is asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to think about how they are acting and what they are thinking. The questions encourage them to think along with Paul. For ways to translate these questions, look for the notes on each verse that includes these kinds of questions. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Words for homosexual behavior

In 6:9, Paul refers to “male prostitutes” and “those who practice homosexuality.” In Paul's culture, these words refer to both participants in homosexual activity. The words “male prostitutes” refers to those who are penetrated during sexual activity, while “those who practice homosexuality” refer to those who do the penetrating during sexual activity. If your culture has specific words to describe these things, you could use them here. If your culture does not have such specific words, you could use general phrases like the ULT does, or you could combine the two phrases into one phrase that identifies homosexual activity.

### Quoting the Corinthians

In 6:12–13, Paul quotes words that the Corinthians have said or that they wrote to him. The ULT indicates these words by putting quotation marks around them. Use a natural way in your language to indicate that an author is quoting someone else. (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)



## 1 Corinthians 6:1

### Do any of you dare, having a dispute with another, to go to court before the unrighteous, and not before the saints

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. Here, the truthful answer to the question is “they are, but they should not.” Paul asks the question to get the Corinthians to realize how bad going **to court before the unrighteous** is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a “should” statement or a statement of fact. Alternate translation: “Some of you actually dare, having a dispute with another, to go to court before the unrighteous, and not before the saints.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

#### Do & dare

Here, **dare** refers to having confidence or boldness when one should not have confidence or boldness. Use a word or phrase in your language that indicates improper confidence. Alternate translation: “Do ... have the audacity” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

#### having a dispute with another

The phrase **having a dispute with another** provides the situation in which they are going **to court**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make it explicit. Alternate translation: “if you have a dispute with another” or “whenever you have a dispute with another” (See: **Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship (p.660)**)

#### another

Here, **another** identifies the other person as a fellow believer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **another** with a word or phrase that identifies **another** as a believer. Alternate translation: “another believer” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

#### to go to court before & before

The phrase **to go to court before** refers to settling a lawsuit or other legal dispute **before** a judge. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **go to court before** with a comparable idiom that refers to settling a dispute in a court of law. Alternate translation: “to resolve your lawsuit in the presence of ... in the presence of” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 6:2

### Or

The word **Or** introduces an alternate to what Paul speaks about in [6:1](#). The Corinthians currently think that going to court in public is fine. Paul gives the true alternative: they **will judge the world** and thus should not need to take their quarrels and lawsuits anywhere else. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Or** with a word that signifies a contrast or gives an alternative. Alternate translation: “Rather,” or “On the other hand,” (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases \(p.662\)](#))

### Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “yes.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong affirmation. Alternate translation: “You already know that the saints will judge the world.” (See: [Rhetorical Question \(p.766\)](#))

### are you unworthy of the smallest cases

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “no.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negative or positive statement. Alternate translation: “you are definitely not unworthy of the smallest cases” or “you are definitely worthy of the smallest cases” (See: [Rhetorical Question \(p.766\)](#))

### if the world is judged by you

Paul is speaking as if **the world is judged by you** was 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 think that what Paul is saying is not certain, then you could translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: “because the world is judged by you” (See: [Connect — Factual Conditions \(p.648\)](#))

### the world is judged by you

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **the world**, which is **judged**, rather than **you**, who do the “judging.” Alternate translation: “you judge the world” (See: [Active or Passive \(p.621\)](#))

### is judged

Here, **is judged** makes a general statement about what **you**, that is, the **saints**, do. The present tense does not mean that the **saints** are currently passing final judgment and will not do so in the future. Rather, Paul uses the present tense to state a general fact about the **saints**. The judgment itself will occur in the future. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the present tense of **is judged** with the future tense here. Alternate translation: “will be judged” (See: [Predictive Past \(p.754\)](#))

### unworthy of the smallest cases

Here, to be **unworthy of** something means that one is not capable of doing that thing or is not qualified to do it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **unworthy of** with a comparable idiom or express the idea

plainly. Alternate translation: “unqualified concerning the smallest cases” “not able to judge the smallest cases” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## of the smallest cases

Here, **cases** could refer to: (1) legal disputes that are resolved in a court of law. Alternate translation: “of the smallest legal disputes” (2) the court of law that decides the legal dispute. Alternate translation: “of the lowest courts of law” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 6:3

### Do you not know that we will judge angels

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “yes.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question as an emphatic statement. Alternate translation: “Surely you know that we will judge angels.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### How much more, matters of this life

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the reader agrees. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question as an emphatic statement. Alternate translation: “How much more the matters of this life!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### How much more, matters of this life

Here Paul omits some words that may be required in your language to make a full sentence. You could supply words such as “can we judge” or “are we able to judge” to complete the thought. Alternate translation: “How much more can we judge the matters of this life” or “How much more are we able to judge the matters of this life” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### How much more

Here Paul’s argument assumes that judging **angels** is a greater and more difficult thing than judging **the matters of this life**. The phrase **How much more** implies that people who can do a great and difficult thing like judging **angels** can easily do a less impressive and easier thing like judging **the matters of this life**. If **How much more** does not express that connection in your language, you could use a word or phrase that does express that connection. Alternate translation: “If we can do that, can we not judge” or “Should it not be easy, then, to judge” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### matters of this life

Here, **matters of this life** refers to anything that is a part of people’s ordinary or daily lives. Paul uses the word to identify the lawsuits among the Corinthians as simply matters of ordinary life and insignificant in comparison with something like judging **angels**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **matters of this life** with a word or phrase that refers to features of daily or regular life. Alternate translation: “what happens in our daily lives” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 6:4

### if you have legal disputes about things of this life

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that they might **have legal disputes**, or they might not **have legal disputes**. He then specifies the result for if they do **have legal disputes**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by introducing it with a word such as “whenever” or “when.” Alternate translation: “when you have legal disputes about things of this life” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### you have legal disputes

Here, **legal disputes** could refer to: (1) legal disputes that are resolved in a court of law. Alternate translation: “you have lawsuits” (2) the court of law that decides the legal dispute. Alternate translation: “you seek a judgment in a court of law” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### about things of this life

Here, **things of this life** refers to anything that is a part of people’s ordinary or daily lives. Paul uses the word to identify the lawsuits among the Corinthians as matters of ordinary life. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **about things of this life** with a word or phrase that refers to features of daily or regular life. Alternate translation: “about what happens in your daily lives” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### why do you appoint as judges these ones of no account in the church

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “there is no good reason.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question as an emphatic statement or a command. Alternate translation: “do not appoint as judges those who are of no account in the church!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### ones of no account in the church

Here, these **ones of no account in the church** could be: (1) people who are not members of the church in Corinth. Alternate translation: “who do not believe” (2) people who are members of the church in Corinth but whom other believers do not respect. Alternate translation: “whom the fellow believers do not respect” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 6:5

### I speak

The phrase **I speak** could refer: (1) to what Paul has already said, probably all of 6:1–4. Alternate translation: “I say those things” (2) to what Paul is saying throughout this whole section (6:1–8). Alternate translation: “I am saying these things” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### to your shame

Here, **to your shame** means that the things that Paul has said should make the Corinthians feel **shame**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **to your shame** with a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “to embarrass you” or “to make you feel ashamed” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### I speak to your shame

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **shame**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “shame.” Alternate translation: “I say this to shame you” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### Is it} thus that there is not any wise {man

The phrase **{Is it} thus that there is not any wise {man}** identifies a situation in which no **wise {man}** can be found. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this phrase or find it confusing with a comparable expression that identifies a situation in which there are no wise people. Alternate translation: “Is there not a wise man” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### Is it} thus that there is not any wise {man} among you who will be able to discern between his brothers

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing, specifically by making them feel ashamed. The question assumes that the answer is “there should be.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a “should” statement or introduce a statement with “surely.” Alternate translation: “You should have a wise man among you who will be able to discern between his brothers.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### there is not any wise {man} & his

Although the words translated **wise {man}** and **his** are masculine, Paul is using them to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these masculine words with non gendered words or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “there are not any wise people ... their” or “there is not any wise man or woman ... his or her” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### brothers

Although **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “brothers and sisters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## **to discern between**

The phrase **to discern between** refers to making decisions about disputes between people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this phrase with a word or phrase that refers to deciding which party is in the right in a dispute. Alternate translation: “to judge between” or “to settle disputes between” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 6:6

### brother goes to court against brother, and this before unbelievers

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that there will be no verbal answer. Rather, the question is supposed to make the Corinthians feel ashamed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a statement that expresses shock or condemnation. Alternate translation: “brother really goes to court against brother, and this before unbelievers!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### brother & brother

Although the words translated **brother** are masculine, Paul is using these words to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brother** with non gendered words or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “a brother or sister ... a brother or sister” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### and this before unbelievers

In this clause, Paul has omitted some words that might be necessary to make a complete thought in your language. If your language needs these words, you could include what action is happening. Alternate translation: “and they do this before unbelievers” or “and they go to court before unbelievers” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)



## 1 Corinthians 6:7

### This, therefore, is indeed already a complete defeat for you, since you have lawsuits among yourselves

Here Paul gives the reason for the **defeat** after he mentions the **defeat**. If your language would state the reason first, you could reverse the order of these clauses. Alternate translation: "Therefore, since you have lawsuits among yourselves, this is indeed already a complete defeat for you" (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### already a complete defeat for you

Here, **already** refers to how the Corinthians do not suffer **defeat** in the court of law but rather before that, when the lawsuit begins. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **already** by clarifying that the time in view is before the lawsuit is decided. Alternate translation: "a complete defeat for you even before you enter the court of law"

### This, therefore, is indeed already a complete defeat for you

Alternate translation: "Therefore, you are indeed already completely defeated"

### a complete defeat

Here, **complete defeat** refers to total failure in attempting to accomplish some goal. The **defeat** does not require an opponent, since one can suffer **defeat** because of other obstacles. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **complete defeat** with a comparable metaphor or plainly. Alternate translation: "a total derailing" or "a total failure" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated

Paul does not ask these questions because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks them to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The questions assume that the reader agrees that it would be better to **be wronged** and **cheated**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these questions by stating the ideas as emphatic comparisons. Alternate translation: "It would be better to be wronged! It would be better to be cheated!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated

Here Paul repeats his first question with almost exactly the same words. He does this to emphasize the point he is making. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine the questions and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "Why not rather be wronged or cheated?" (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)

### be wronged

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **wronged** rather than the person doing the "wronging." If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that a "fellow believer" does it. Alternate translation: "let a fellow believer wrong you" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

**be cheated**

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **cheated** rather than focusing on the person doing the “cheating.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that a “fellow believer” does it. Alternate translation: “let a fellow believer cheat you” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## 1 Corinthians 6:8

### But

Here, **But** introduces a contrast with what Paul wants them to do, which is to “be wronged” and “cheated” rather than take a fellow believer to court. Here Paul says that they do the exact opposite. Rather than “be wronged” and “cheated,” they actually **wrong** and **cheat** fellow believers. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this connection with a phrase that clarifies what Paul is contrasting. Alternate translation: “But instead of being wronged and cheated,” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### and this to your brothers

In this clause, Paul has omitted some words that might be necessary to make a complete thought in your language. If your language needs these words, you could include what action is happening. Alternate translation: “and you do this to your brothers” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### to your brothers

Although **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using this word to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “to your brothers and sisters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## 1 Corinthians 6:9

In 6:9–10, Paul lists people who do things that are unrighteous. Many of these words are the same words he used in the similar lists in 5:10–11. It may be helpful to refer to how you translated the words there.

### Or

The word **Or** introduces Paul's question as an alternative to "wronging and cheating brothers" in 6:7. If they do indeed **know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God**, they should not be "wronging and cheating brothers." Paul uses the word **Or** to show that these two things are not compatible. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Or** with a word or phrase that introduces an alternative. Alternate translation: "Against that," (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is "yes, we know." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong affirmation. Alternate translation: "Surely you know that the unrighteous will not enter the kingdom of God." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### the unrighteous

Paul is using the adjective **unrighteous** 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: "people who are unrighteous" or "unrighteous people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### will not inherit

Here Paul speaks of the **kingdom of God** as if it were property that a parent could pass on to their child when the parent dies. Here, Paul uses the word **inherit** to refer to being able to live in the **kingdom of God**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "will not live in" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### Do not be deceived

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **deceived** rather than focusing on the person doing the "deceiving." If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: "Let no one deceive you" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### the sexually immoral

Paul is using the adjective phrase **sexually immoral** 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: "people who are sexually immoral" or "sexually immoral people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### nor male prostitutes nor practicing homosexuals

The word translated **male prostitutes** identifies men who are penetrated during sexual acts with other men. The word translated **practicing homosexuals** identifies men who penetrate other men during sexual acts. Your

language may have specific words for these behaviors. If so, you could use them here. If your language does not have specific words for these behavior, you can either use descriptive phrases, or you can combine the two words and refer to homosexual activity in general. Alternate translation: “nor men who practice homosexuality” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## practicing homosexuals

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **homosexuals**, you can express the idea by using verbal form. Alternate translation: “those who have same-sex intercourse” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 6:10

### the greedy

Paul is using the adjective **greedy** 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: “people who are greedy” or “greedy people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### slanderers

Here, **slanderers** is the same word that is translated “verbally abusive” in [5:11](#). It describes someone who shows anger by using vicious words to attack others. Use a word in your language that describes this kind of person. Alternate translation: “vocally vicious people” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### swindlers

Here, **swindlers** is the same word that is translated “swindler” in [5:11](#). It identifies a person who takes money from others dishonestly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **swindlers** with a word that refers to such people. Alternate translation: “embezzlers” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### will inherit

Here Paul speaks of the **kingdom of God** as if it were property that a parent could pass on to their child when the parent dies. Here, Paul uses the word **inherit** to refer to being able to live in the **kingdom of God**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “will live in” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 6:11

### that {is what

Here, **that** refers to the list of unrighteous behaviors that Paul gave in 6:9–10. Paul identifies **some** of the Corinthians as people who behaved in those ways. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **that** by more clearly referring back to the list of unrighteous behaviors. Alternate translation: “those kinds of people are what” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified

Here Paul repeats **But you were** in order to emphasize the contrast between what the Corinthians **were** and what they have now experienced. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you can use **But you were** once and express the strong contrast in another way. Alternate translation: “But now you have been washed, sanctified, and justified” (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)

### you were washed, & you were sanctified, & you were justified

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **you**, who are **washed, sanctified, and justified**, rather than the person doing the “washing,” “sanctifying,” and “justifying.” If you must state who does the actions, Paul implies that “God” does them. Alternate translation: “God washed you ... God sanctified you ... God justified you” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### you were washed

Here Paul speaks as if the Corinthians had been **washed** with water. By speaking in this way, Paul emphasizes that they have been cleansed from sin, just like washing with water cleanses a person from dirt. Paul may have baptism in mind. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “you were washed clean” or “you were purified” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ

When something is done **in the name of** a person, it is done with the authority or power of that person. Here the cleansing, sanctification, and justification are done with the authority or power of Jesus, since they are done **in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in the name of** with a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “with the power of the Lord Jesus Christ” or “by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### the Spirit of our God

Here Paul uses the possessive form to identify the **Spirit** as **our God**, that is, as the Holy Spirit. He does not mean that the **Spirit** is something that belongs to **our God**. If your language would not use that form to identify the **Spirit** as **our God**, you could use a word or phrase that does identify the **Spirit** as **our God** or the “Holy Spirit.” Alternate translation: “the Spirit who is our God” or “the Holy Spirit, our God” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## 1 Corinthians 6:12

### Everything is lawful for me," but not everything is beneficial. "& is lawful for me," but I will not be mastered by anything

Here Paul repeats **Everything is lawful for me** to make two separate comments on the statement. By repeating **Everything is lawful for me**, Paul emphasizes his qualifications or objections to this statement. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you can state **Everything is lawful for me** once and include both comments after that. Alternate translation: "'Everything is lawful for me,' but not everything is beneficial, and I will not be mastered by anything" (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)

### Everything is lawful for me," but & Everything is lawful for me," but

## Connecting Statement:

In this verse, Paul twice quotes what some people in the Corinthian church are saying. The ULT, by using quotation marks, indicates that these claims are quotations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Everything is lawful for me** and think that Paul is claiming this by clarifying that some of the Corinthians are saying this, and Paul is saying the words that occur after **but**. Alternate translation: "You say, 'Everything is lawful for me,' but I respond that ... You say, 'Everything is lawful for me,' but I respond that" (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

### Everything & everything & Everything

Here, **Everything** refers to any action or behavior that one might pursue. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Everything** by clarifying that Paul is referring to any action or behavior. Alternate translation: "Every behavior ... every behavior ... Every behavior" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### is beneficial

Here Paul does not say to whom **everything** is not **beneficial**. He means that **everything** is not **beneficial** to the person or people who say that **Everything is lawful** for them. If your language would include for whom **everything** is not **beneficial**, you could include a phrase such as "for you" here. Alternate translation: "is beneficial for you" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### I will not be mastered by anything

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are not **mastered** rather than focusing on **anything**, which tries to do the "mastering." Alternate translation: "nothing will master me" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### will not be mastered by

Here, **be mastered** refers to being under the authority of something else. Paul here means that some things, when a person habitually does them, begin to have power or control over that person. Here, then, he wishes to tell the Corinthians that, while such things might be **lawful**, they should avoid doing these things because they will **be mastered** by these things. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **be**



**mastered** by using words that refer to “power” or “control.” Alternate translation: “will not be controlled by” or “will not be under the power of” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 6:13

### Food {is} for the stomach, and the stomach for food,” but

In this verse, Paul quotes what some people in the Corinthian church are saying, just like he did in 6:12. The ULT, by using quotation marks, indicates that this claim is a quotation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Food {is} for the stomach, and the stomach for food** and think that Paul is claiming this by clarifying that some of the Corinthians are saying this, and Paul is saying the words that occur after **but**. Alternate translation: “You say, ‘Food is for the stomach, and the stomach for food,’ but I respond that” (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

### Food {is} for the stomach, and the stomach for food,” & the body {is} not for sexual immorality, but for the Lord and the Lord for the body

In these two sentences, Paul omits **{is}** multiple times. If your language does not need to state **{is}** to express the idea, you can omit **{is}** throughout these two sentences. If your language does need to state **{is}** to express the idea, you could: (1) include **{is}** the first time it is needed in each sentence. See the ULT. (2) include **{is}** every time it is needed. Alternate translation: “Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food ... the body is not for sexual immorality, but is for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### will do away with

Here, **will do away with** refers to making something ineffective, useless, or irrelevant. What Paul means is that God will make **food** and **the stomach** unimportant and without function. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **will do away with** with a word or phrase that indicates that a God has acted so that **food** and **the stomach** are no longer important, useful, or effective. Alternate translation: “will render ineffective” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### both this and those

Here, **this** refers to **stomach**, and **those** refers to **food**, since **food** is plural here. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express what **this** and **those** refer to with the names **stomach** and **food** instead. Alternate translation: “both stomach and food” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### Now

Here, **Now** introduces a development based on what Paul has said about **food** and **the stomach**. While **food** is indeed **for the stomach**, the **body** is not **for sexual immorality**. Paul agrees with the Corinthians about **food** and **the stomach**, but he disagrees that **sexual immorality** and **the body** should be understood in the same way. Instead, **the body** exists **for the Lord**. Paul further explains in the next verse (6:14) that, unlike **food** and **the stomach**, God will not **do away with** the **body**, since we will be resurrected. If **Now** would not introduce a difference between **the stomach** and **the body**, you could use a word or phrase that does introduce such a contrast. Alternate translation: “On the other hand,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### for sexual immorality

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **immorality**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as “immoral.” Alternate translation: “for what is sexually immoral” or “sexually immoral behavior” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## for the Lord

Here Paul means that the **body** is meant to serve and please **the Lord**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **for the Lord** with a verbal phrase that indicates that the **body** should serve **the Lord**. Alternate translation: “for pleasing the Lord” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## and the Lord for the body

Here, **the Lord for the body** could express the idea that: (1) the **Lord** works for the human **body** and not just the human “soul” or nonphysical part. If you use either of the following alternate translations, you may need to include a comma before it. Alternate translation: “and the Lord works for the body” (2) the **Lord** is human now and in a **body**, which would explain why Paul speaks about the resurrection of the **Lord** in the next verse. Alternate translation: “and the Lord has a human body” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 6:14

### Now

Here, **Now** introduces one way in which “the Lord is for the body” (6:13). Human bodies are important and are not for sexual immorality, because God will raise those who believe to new life, and this includes human bodies. If **Now** would not introduce a further development of the argument in your language, you could use a word or phrase that does function in this way. Alternate translation: “Further,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### raised the Lord and will also raise up us

Paul uses the words **raised** and **raise up** to refer to someone who had previously died coming back to life. If your language does not use these words to describe coming back to life, you can use a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “restored the Lord to life and will also restore us to life” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### raised & will & raise up

Here, **raised** and **raise up** have the same meaning. Paul uses a slightly different word for variety or because he is referring to the future. In your translation, you could use the same word for **raised** and **raise up**. Alternate translation: “raised ... will ... raise”

### by his power

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **power**, you can express the idea by using an adverb such as “powerfully” or an adjective such as “powerful.” Alternate translation: “by working powerfully” or “by his powerful action” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 6:15

### members of Christ? & the members of Christ, & members of a prostitute

Here Paul speaks as if the Corinthians were **members**, which are body parts, that belong either to **Christ** or to a **prostitute**. He speaks in this way to indicate how closely joined the Corinthians are either to **Christ** or to a **prostitute**. This union is as close as the union between a finger and the body to which it belongs. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “united to Christ ... people who are united to Christ ... unite with a prostitute” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “yes, we know.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong affirmation. Alternate translation: “You should know that your bodies are members of Christ.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### having taken away the members of Christ

Here Paul speaks about **taking away the members of Christ** as if, like cutting off a finger, he could remove a body part from **Christ**. He speaks in this way to show how bad it is to remove a person from union with **Christ**. It is as bad as cutting off a finger, arm, or leg from a person’s body. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “having removed people from union with Christ” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### having taken away the members of Christ, should I make {them} members of a prostitute

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “no, you should not.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negation. Alternate translation: “I should never take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### should I make {them}

Here Paul speaks in the first person because he is using himself as an example. If it would be helpful in your language, you could include a word or phrase that clarifies that Paul is treating himself as an example, or you could use a form that would naturally provide an example in your language. Alternate translation: “should I, for example, make them” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.687)**)

### May it never be

Here, **May it never be!** gives Paul’s own response to his question. The phrase is one of the strongest negatives Paul could use. Use a strong word or phrase that answers a question with a no. Alternate translation: “Never!” or “Absolutely not!” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 6:16

### Or do you not know that the one being joined to the prostitute is one body

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “yes, we know.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question as an emphatic statement. Alternate translation: “You know for sure that the one who is joined to the prostitute is one body.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### the one being joined to the prostitute

Here, **being joined to the prostitute** is a euphemism for having sex with a **prostitute**. Paul uses this euphemism in order to be polite. He also picks this specific euphemism because it can also refer to **being joined** to someone without sexual implications. He uses the phrase in this way in the next verse to speak about union with Christ (6:17). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **being joined to the prostitute** with a similar polite euphemism in your language. If possible, use a euphemism that can also work to describe the nonsexual union with Christ in the next verse. Alternate translation: “the one who lives with the prostitute” (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

### the one being joined to the prostitute

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the person who is **joined** rather than the person doing the “joining.” If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that the person did it to himself. Alternate translation: “the one who joins himself to the prostitute” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### to the prostitute

Jesus is speaking of prostitutes in general, not of one particular **prostitute**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a phrase that refers in general to “prostitutes.” Alternate translation: “to any prostitute” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### is one body

Here Paul is pointing out that **the one being joined** and the **prostitute** make up **one body** together. He is not arguing that **the one being joined** by himself is **one body**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could include some words that Paul implies. Alternate translation: “is one body with her” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### is one body

Here Paul is speaking as if **the one being joined** and the **prostitute** together share **one body** when they have sex. He speaks in this way to emphasize the unity that these two people have when they have sex, which is as close as if they had only one body. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “shares all things with her” or “is united to her” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### For it says

In Paul’s culture, **For it says** is a normal way to introduce a quotation from an important text, in this case, the Old Testament book titled “Genesis” (See: [Genesis 2:24](#)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a

comparable phrase that indicates that Paul is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: “For it can be read in the Old Testament” or “For in the book of Genesis we read” (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

## it says, “The two will become as one flesh

If you do not use this form in your language, you could translate these statements as indirect quotes instead of as direct quotes. Alternate translation: “it says that the two will become as one flesh” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

## The two will become as one flesh

The passage that Paul quotes here comes from the book of Genesis. The story is about God creating Adam and Eve, the first man and woman. When God brings Eve, the woman, to the man named Adam, the narrative comments that this is why “a man will leave his father and his mother, and he will cling to his wife, and they will become one flesh” ([Genesis 2:24](#)). Paul quotes the end of this sentence here. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express what this quote refers to, you could include a footnote explaining the context. Additionally by clarifying what the word **two** refers to. Alternate translation: “A man and a woman will become as one flesh” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 6:17

### the one being joined to the Lord

Here, **being joined to the Lord** refers to what Paul elsewhere describes as being “in Christ” or “united to Christ.” Paul uses this specific phrase because he used it in the last verse to refer to union with a “prostitute” (See: 6:16). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **being joined to the Lord** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. If possible, use the same words you that you used in the last verse for “joined to the prostitute.” Alternate translation: “the one who lives with the Lord” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### the one being joined to the Lord

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the person **being joined** rather than the person doing the “joining.” If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that the person did it to himself or herself. Alternate translation: “the one who joins himself to the Lord” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### is one spirit

Here Paul is pointing out that the **one being joined** and the **Lord** make up **one spirit** together. He is not arguing that the **one being joined** by himself is **one spirit**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could include some words that Paul implies. Alternate translation: “is one spirit with him” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### is one spirit

Here Paul is speaking as if the **one being joined** and the **Lord** together share **one spirit** when the **one being joined** believes in the **Lord**. He speaks in this way to emphasize the unity between a believer and Jesus, which is as close as if they had only one spirit. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “shares all things with him spiritually” or “is spiritually united to him” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### spirit

Here, **spirit** could refer to: (1) a person’s **spirit** in contrast to his or her “body.” While a prostitute and a man can have “one body” (6:16), which is a physical union, the Lord and a believer can have **one spirit**, which is a spiritual union. Alternate translation: “spiritually” (2) the Holy Spirit, who unites the Lord and the believer. Alternate translation: “in the Holy Spirit”



## 1 Corinthians 6:18

### Flee from

Here Paul wants the Corinthians to avoid **sexual immorality** as urgently as if it were an enemy or danger that they might **Flee from**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “Carefully stay away from” or “Fight against” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### sexual immorality

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **immorality**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as “immoral.” Alternate translation: “what is sexually immoral” or “sexually immoral behavior” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### Every sin that a man might commit is outside the body, but the one being sexually immoral sins against his own body

If it would appear in your language that Paul was making a statement here and then contradicting it, you could reword this to avoid using exception language. Alternate translation: “Almost every sin that a man might commit is outside the body, but the one who is sexually immoral sins against his own body” (See: **Connect — Exception Clauses (p.646)**)

### a man & his own

Although **man** and **his** are masculine, Paul is using these words to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **man** and **his** with non gendered words or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “a man or woman ... his or her own” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### is outside the body

Here Paul speaks as if sins were located **outside the body**. By speaking in this way, he means that most sins do not affect the **body** the way **sexual immorality** does. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this figure of speech plainly or with a comparable metaphor. Alternate translation: “does not directly affect the body” or “is apart from the body” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 6:19

### Or

The word **Or** introduces an alternate to what Paul speaks about in 6:18. Some people are indeed “sinning against their bodies.” Paul gives the correct alternative: they should **know** that their bodies are the “temple” of the **Holy Spirit**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Or** with a word that signifies a contrast or gives an alternative. Alternate translation: “Rather,” or “On the other hand,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit in you, whom you have from God

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “yes, we know.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong affirmation. Alternate translation: “You certainly know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit in you, whom you have from God.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### your body

The word **body** is a singular noun that refers to multiple “bodies.” Paul makes this clear by using a plural **your**. If your language does not use singular nouns in that way, you can use a different expression. Alternate translation: “each of your bodies” (See: **Collective Nouns (p.635)**)

### a temple of the Holy Spirit in you

Here Paul speaks of the relationship between the believer and the **Holy Spirit** as if the believer were a **temple** and the **Holy Spirit** were the god that dwelled in that temple. In Paul’s culture, deities had specific temples, and they would be specially present to their worshipers in those temples. Paul applies this thinking to believers. Each believer is a **temple**, and the **Holy Spirit** is **in** each believer. This means that the Holy Spirit is specially present with each believer. This is a significant metaphor in the Bible so, if possible, preserve the metaphor or express the idea by using a simile. Alternate translation: “is a temple in which the Holy Spirit dwells” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### whom you have from God

Alternate translation: “whom God has given to you”

## 1 Corinthians 6:20

### you were bought with a price

Here Paul speaks of the Corinthians as slaves whom God had **bought with a price** from someone else. Paul is speaking of what we often call “redemption.” The **price** is Christ’s death on the cross, which “redeems” believers from sin and evil powers. This is an important biblical metaphor so, if possible, preserve the metaphor or express it as an analogy. Alternate translation: “you were bought with a price, which is the Messiah’s death” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### you were bought with a price

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **bought** rather than the person doing the “buying.” If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that “God” did it. Alternate translation: “God bought you with a price” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### in your body

Alternate translation: “with your body” or “with what you do with your body”

### in your body

After **your body**, a few early manuscripts include “and in your spirit, which belong to God.” Most early manuscripts do not include these additional words. If possible, do not include this addition. (See: **Textual Variants (p.775)**)

# 1 Corinthians 7

## 1 Corinthians 7 General Notes

### Structure and Formatting

On abstinence (7:1–40)

- Directions on sex in marriage (7:1–7)
- Directions on marriage and divorce (7:8–16)
- Believers should remain as God called them (7:17–24)
- Benefit of staying as one is, whether single or married (7:25–35)
- Exceptions for engaged Christians and widows (7:36–40)

## Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

### The letter from the Corinthians to Paul

In [7:1](#), Paul says that the Corinthians wrote to him. In fact, the second half of the verse is probably a quote from their letter to Paul. To show this, the ULT puts the quotation inside quotation marks. We do not know what else the letter included about marriage and sex. In the rest of the chapter, though, Paul responds to what they wrote to him.

### Sex and marriage

Throughout this chapter, Paul speaks at length about sex and marriage. While he does not argue this here, he assumes that sexual relations should only take place within a marriage. This is clear when he says that lack of sexual self-control is a good reason to get married in [7:9](#). Further, he has four categories of people in mind: those who have never gotten married, those who are engaged to be married, those who are no longer married (whether through divorce or death of a spouse), and those who are currently married. Whether your language has more or fewer categories for marital status, make the distinctions between these four categories as clear as possible.

### Sanctification of unbelieving spouse and children

In [7:12–16](#), Paul addresses Christian men and women who have an unbelieving spouse. He specifically argues that they should stay together unless the unbelieving spouse wishes to leave the marriage. He argues that they should stay together because the unbelieving spouse and the children are “sanctified” by the believing spouse. By “sanctified,” Paul does not mean that the unbelieving spouse and the children are considered to be Christians whom God has saved. Rather, “sanctified” identifies the unbelieving spouse and the children as appropriate family for the believing spouse. In other words, having an unbelieving spouse does not make one’s marriage and children improper before God. Instead, God “sanctifies” them. If your language has a way to refer to an improper or unacceptable marriage, you might be able to use those kinds of words here.

### Divorce

In this passage, Paul uses a number of words and phrases to refer to what we call divorce: “being separated” ([7:10–11](#)), “divorce” ([11–13](#)), “departing” ([15](#)), and “being released” ([27](#)). In Paul’s culture, the rules for divorce were different in different places, and some divorces would have been more formal and legal than others. Additionally, in many places both men and women could divorce a spouse, but in a few places only men could divorce their wives. If Paul’s language would be understood in your language, you should try to preserve the different words

and phrases he uses. If you need to make his language more consistent, use a word or phrase that refers generally to ending a marriage. (See: [\[\[rc://\\*/tw/dict/bible/other/divorce\]\]](#))

## The “virgin”

In [7:25–38](#), Paul refers repeatedly to “virgins.” With this word, he identifies a woman who has never been married. The word does not necessarily mean that the woman has never had any sexual experiences. When Paul identifies the virgin as “his virgin,” he refers either to a woman who is engaged to be married to a man or to a daughter who is under the authority of her father (See: the last section in this introduction). In your language, use a word or phrase that refers to a woman who has never been married.

## The “coming distress”

In [7:26](#), Paul speaks of the “coming distress.” This is trouble, persecution, or difficulties that affect the Corinthian church and perhaps all churches. When Paul says that the distress is “coming,” he could mean that it has already begun to happen and will continue to happen. It is more likely, however, that “coming” means that the distress is about to begin. Because of this “distress,” Paul thinks that believers are better off not getting married. It is unclear what Paul thought about the length of this “distress.” Is the “distress” still happening in the present day? It is better not to clarify the answer to this in your translation, since Paul does not give any hints. (See: **trouble, disturb, stir up, distress, hardship, calamity (p.814)**)

## Calling

Paul refers consistently to a “calling” and to “being called” in [7:17–24](#). Throughout this section, “being called” refers to God’s action to save a person. Paul speaks about a person’s situation when they “were called” as a “calling” in [7:20](#), while in other places he specifies what that situation might be: married or unmarried, circumcised or uncircumcised, slave or free. The point Paul wishes to make is that God’s “call” does not require one to change one’s situation. Rather, God’s “call” is for people to serve him in the situation they are in. (See: [\[\[rc://\\*/tw/dict/bible/kt/call\]\]](#))

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Euphemisms for having sex

In the first half of this chapter, Paul uses many euphemisms for having sex: “touching a woman” ([7:1](#)), “duty” ([3](#)), not “depriving each other” ([5](#)), and being “together again” ([5](#)). In most cases, he speaks in this way to be polite and avoid offending those who would read the letter. When this is true, you could translate Paul’s language with any polite way of referring to having sex in your language. However, the euphemism “duty” in ([7:3](#)) particularly emphasizes that married couples are required to have sex. If your language has a euphemism that emphasizes “duty,” you could use it in that verse. (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

### Redemption

Just as in [6:20](#), in [7:23](#) Paul tells the Corinthians that they have been “bought with a price.” He does not state what the price is or from whom God bought the Corinthians. However, it is clear that Paul is speaking about what we call “redemption” here. Paul thinks of the Corinthians as slaves who are for sale, and God buys them from their previous owner by paying a price. The previous owner can be understood as sin, death, and evil powers, while the price is Jesus the Son dying for believers. You should not include all these implications in your translation, but you should use words that can be interpreted in this way. (See: **redeem, redeemer, redemption (p.809)**)

## Those who have ... should be as those who do not have ...

In [7:29–31](#), Paul emphasizes that those who have or do something “should be as those” who do not have or do that thing. He emphasizes this by giving a list of five examples. Paul’s point is that actions or things related to this world should not define who Christians are. He backs this up in [7:31](#) by stating that “the present form of this world is passing away.” Therefore, those who weep should act like those who do not weep, and those who are married should act like those who are not married. Neither weeping nor marriage should have an impact on who the Christian is and on what the Christian does. As a Christian, none of these five things, which stand for everything in the “present form of this world,” are significant for one’s relationship to God. If possible, preserve the strong contrasts, which almost sound like contradictions. These strong contrasts are an essential part of Paul’s argument.

## Rhetorical questions

Paul uses rhetorical questions in [7:16](#). He asks these questions to involve the Corinthians in his argument and to force them to think about what he is saying. He again uses rhetorical questions in [7:18](#), [21](#), [27](#). He asks these questions for a different reason: to identify those to whom his statements apply. If possible, you should preserve these questions. However, if your language does not use rhetorical questions, see the notes on each question for other translation possibilities. (See: **Rhetorical Question** (p.766))

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Translating gendered words

In much of this chapter, Paul uses masculine and feminine words to identify when he is addressing men and when he is addressing women. Unlike in most of the previous chapters, then, you should intentionally preserve most of the gendered language in this chapter. The notes will identify any cases of gendered language that refer to all people. If there is no note, assume that the gendered language is functioning to distinguish between genders.

### Who speaks, Paul or the Lord?

Throughout this chapter, Paul uses a number of phrases to indicate whose authority lies behind the commands he gives. First, he marks [7:10–11](#) as something that the Lord, not him, has spoken. Of course, he himself is speaking, but he is summarizing the Lord’s teaching on divorce. Therefore, “not I, but the Lord” in [7:11](#) is Paul’s way of indicating that he is summarizing teaching directly from the Lord. Second, he marks [7:12–16](#) as something he commands. By using “I, not the Lord” in [7:12](#), he indicates that he gives the commands that follow on his own authority as an apostle. He is not saying that these commands are not as authoritative or important as those in [7:10–11](#). Third, Paul introduces [7:25–40](#) by stating that again he does “not have a command from the Lord,” but that he gives “an opinion” that God has made “trustworthy.” He concludes the section by stating that he has given his “judgment,” and he has the “Spirit of God” ([7:40](#)). This is a slightly weaker claim to authority than he made in [7:12](#): these are his “opinion” or “judgment.” However, Paul also claims that God has made him “trustworthy” and given him the Spirit, so these verses should not be taken simply as Paul’s private opinion. Rather, Paul himself already provides exceptions and qualifications in this section because he is less confident. Do not translate what Paul says as if it were simply advice from someone. Instead, this whole chapter carries apostolic authority.

### Father or fiancé in [7:36–38](#)?

In these verses, Paul repeatedly refers to “he” or “him.” He does not state who this man is, but the man has a “virgin.” There are two common ways to understand these verses. First, and more likely, the man is engaged to “his virgin,” and Paul is giving him instructions on whether to get married or not. Second, and less likely, the man is the father of the daughter (“his virgin”), and Paul is giving him instructions on whether to give his daughter in marriage

or not. If a specific translation choice follows one of these interpretations instead of the other, the notes on these verses will point out whether it matches the “fiancé interpretation” or the “father interpretation.”

## 1 Corinthians 7:1

### Now

Here, **Now** introduces a new topic in the letter. Paul begins to discuss things that the Corinthians asked him about in a letter. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Now** with a word or phrase that introduces a new topic. Alternate translation: “Next,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### what you wrote

The phrase **what you wrote** implies that the Corinthians had previously written a letter to Paul in which they asked him questions. Paul now begins to answer those questions. If **what you wrote** would not imply that the Corinthians had already written a letter to Paul, you could make this explicit. Alternate translation: “what you wrote to me in your letter” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### you wrote: “{It is} good for a man not to touch a woman

Here Paul could be: (1) quoting what the Corinthians said in their letter so that he can respond to it, much like he did in [6:12–13](#). Alternate translation: “you wrote: You said, ‘It is good for a man not to touch a woman.’” (2) expressing his own views about men and women. Alternate translation: “you wrote: It is true that it is good for a man not to touch a woman” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### It is} good for a man not to touch a woman

Alternate translation: “When a man does not touch a woman, that is good”

### for a man & a woman

While the words **man** and **woman** could refer specifically to “husband” and “wife,” Paul is quoting a more general statement here that refers to men and women in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **man** and **woman** with words that refer more specifically to the sex of the people involved. Alternate translation: “for a male ... a female” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### for a man & a woman

Here Paul refers to **man** and **woman** in the singular, but he is speaking generically of any **man** and any **woman**. If your language does not use the singular form to refer to people in general, you can use a form that does refer generically to people in your language. Alternate translation: “for men ... women” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### for a man not to touch a woman

Here, **for a man to touch a woman** is a euphemism for having sex. This is a general statement about having sex, although Paul primarily speaks about sex within marriage in the verses that follow. The Corinthians used this euphemism in their letter to Paul in order to be polite. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **for a man not to touch a woman** with a similar polite euphemism in your language. Alternate translation: “for a man not to sleep with a woman” (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)



## 1 Corinthians 7:2

### But

Here, **But** introduces the qualifications Paul wishes to give for the statement in the previous verse: “{It is} good for a man not to touch a woman.” Paul wishes to give qualifications about whether that statement is from the Corinthians or is Paul’s own statement. Use a word or phrase in your culture that introduces qualifications to a claim. Alternate translation: “However,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### because of immorality

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **immorality**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as “immoral.” Alternate translation: “because people are immoral” or “because of immoral behavior” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### because of immorality

Here, **because of immorality** refers to how people desire to commit **immorality** and do commit **immorality**. Paul does not refer to **immorality** in the abstract. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **immorality** with a word or phrase that refers to “temptation” or “behavior.” Alternate translation: “because of the temptation of immorality” or “because people act immorally” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

### let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband

Here Paul uses two third-person imperatives. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use them here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea by using a word such as “should” or “allow.” Alternate translation: “each man should have his own wife, and each woman should have her own husband” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband

The phrases **have his own wife** and **have her own husband** refer primarily to the ongoing state of being married, which includes continuing to have sex. However, the idiom primarily emphasizes remaining in a state of marriage with one’s current spouse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **have his own wife** and **have her own husband** with a comparable idiom or refer directly to staying married. Alternate translation: “let each man continue in marriage with his own wife, and let each woman continue in marriage with her own husband” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:3

### the husband & to the wife & the wife & to the husband

Here Paul refers to **the husband** and **the wife** in the singular, but he is speaking generically about any **husband** and **wife**. If your language does not use the singular form to refer to people in general, you can use a form that does refer generically to people in your language. Alternate translation: “each husband ... to his wife ... each wife ... to her husband” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### Let the husband give

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “must.” Alternate translation: “A husband should give” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### Let the husband give to the wife the duty

Here Paul uses **duty** to refer to married couples having sex. He uses this word to be polite and also because he wishes to emphasize that having sex is an obligation for married couples. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **duty** with a comparable euphemism or refer directly to how married couples “should” have sex. Alternate translation: “Let the husband fulfill his sexual obligations to the wife” (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

### likewise the wife also to the husband

Here Paul omits some words that may be required in your language to make a full sentence. You could supply words from the first half of the verse to complete the thought. Alternate translation: “likewise let the wife also give to the husband the duty” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:4

### The wife & the husband {does}. & the husband & the wife {does

Just as in 7:3, Paul here refers to **the husband** and **the wife** in the singular, but he is speaking generically about any **husband** and **wife**. If your language does not use the singular form to refer to people in general, you can use a form that does refer generically to people in your language. Alternate translation: “each wife ... her husband does ... each husband ... his wife does” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### does not have authority over her own body, & does not have authority over his own body

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **authority**, you can express the idea by using a verb or verbal phrase such as “control” or “claim as one’s own.” Alternate translation: “does not control her own body ... does not control his own body” or “does not claim her body as her own ... does not claim his body as his own” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### the husband {does}. & the wife {does

In both these places, Paul omits some words that may be required in your language to make a full sentence. You could supply words from the first half of each statement in order to complete the thought, as the ULT does. Alternate translation: “the husband has authority over her body ... the wife has authority over his body” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:5

### Do not deprive each other

Here Paul omits a direct reference to having sex in order to be polite. The Corinthians would have understood him to mean that they should not **deprive each other** of having sex. If your readers also would understand this, you could express the idea the same way Paul did. If your readers would not understand this, you may need to include a word or phrase that politely refers to having sex. Alternate translation: "Do not deprive each other of sleeping together" (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

### Do not deprive each other, except by mutual agreement

If it would appear in your language that Paul was making a statement here and then contradicting it, you could reword this to avoid using an exception clause. Alternate translation: "You should deprive each other only in one situation: by mutual agreement" (See: **Connect — Exception Clauses (p.646)**)

### by mutual agreement

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **agreement**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "agree." Alternate translation: "when you both agree" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### for a season

Here, **for a season** identifies a short, undefined period of time. The word **season** does not refer to winter or summer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **for a season** with a word or phrase that refers vaguely to a short time. Alternate translation: "for a short period of time" "for a brief time" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### so that

Here, **so that** introduces the purpose for which the Corinthians can **deprive each other**. In other words, it gives the purpose for the **except** statement. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express what **so that** refers back to by clarifying that it explains why the Corinthians can **deprive each other**. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a period before it. Alternate translation: "You may deprive each only so that" (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.650)**)

### you may devote {yourselves} to prayer

Here, **devote {yourselves}** refers to making time to focus on something specific. Paul argues that the only time to avoid having sex with one's spouse is so that both spouses have extra time to focus on praying to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **devote {yourselves}** with a comparable expression. Alternate translation: "you may make more time for prayer" or "you may spend more time in prayer" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### to prayer

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **prayer**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "praying." Alternate translation: "to praying" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## be together again

Here, **be together again** is a polite way to refer to resuming sexual relations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **be together again** with a comparable phrase that politely refers to having sex. Alternate translation: “sleep together again” (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

## so that

Here, **so that** could introduce the purpose for which: (1) the Corinthians need quickly to **be together again**. It is because Satan will **tempt** them unless they are **together**. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a period before it. Alternate translation: “Be together again soon so that” (2) the Corinthians should not **deprive each other**. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a period before it. Alternate translation: “The point of not depriving each other is so that” (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.650)**)

## because of

Here, **because** could introduce the reason why: (1) **Satan** may **tempt** them. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a comma before it. Alternate translation: “which he would do because of” (2) they should soon **be together again**. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a period before it. Alternate translation: “You should do this because of” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

## because of your lack of self-control

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **self-control**, you can express the idea by using a verbal phrase such as “cannot restrain.” Alternate translation: “because you cannot restrain yourselves” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:6

### this

Here, **this** could refer to: (1) what Paul has said about the one situation in which they may “deprive each other” in [7:5](#). Alternate translation: “this about when you may deprive each other” (2) what Paul has said about how married couples should regularly have sex in [7:2–5](#). Alternate translation: “this about being married” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### as a concession, not as a command

If your language would express the negative statement before the positive, you could reverse the order of these two phrases. Alternate translation: “not as a command but as a concession” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### a concession

Here, **a concession** is something that one allows even though one does not entirely agree with it. Usually, the **concession** is made because one wishes to avoid antagonizing the person one is dealing with. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **concession** by using a comparable word or phrase. Alternate translation: “a compromise” or “an allowance” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### as a concession, not as a command

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **concession** and **command**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “concede” and “command.” Alternate translation: “because I concede it, not because I command it” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:7

### But

Here, **But** introduces a contrast with everything that Paul has said in 7:1–6. In those verses, he speaks about how believers should act when they are already married. Now, however, he begins to talk about getting married, and he says that he wishes that people stayed unmarried, like he does. The **But** introduces a new stage in the argument that deals with getting married. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **But** with a word or phrase that introduces a new but related topic. Alternate translation: “Now” or “Moving on,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### to be even as myself

When Paul wrote this letter, he was not married, and as far as we know, he was never married. When Paul says that he wishes that all people were **even as myself**, he is referring to how he is unmarried. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **to be even as myself** to include the fact that Paul is not married. Alternate translation: “to be unmarried as I am” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### men & his own

Although **men** and **his** are masculine, Paul is using these words to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **men** and **his** with non gendered words or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “men and women ... his or her own” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### gift

Here Paul speaks about the way of life that God has called each person to live as if it were a **gift** that each person receives from God. By using **gift**, Paul emphasizes that the person receives the **gift** freely from God and that the **gift** is a good thing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **gift** plainly or with a comparable metaphor. Alternate translation: “blessing” or “calling” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### one indeed this way, and another that way

Here Paul omits some words that may be necessary in your language to make a complete thought. If your language needs these words, you could include a phrase such as “acts in” or “live in.” Alternate translation: “one indeed acts in this way, and another acts in that way” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:8

### to the unmarried

Here, **unmarried** could refer to: (1) people who are not currently married, whether they never have been married or are no longer married. Alternate translation: “to those without spouses” (2) men whose wives have died, which pairs well with **widows**. Alternate translation: “to the widowers” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### to the unmarried

Paul is using the adjective **unmarried** 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 **unmarried** with a noun phrase or a relative clause. Alternate translation: “to those who are unmarried” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### to the widows

Here, **widows** refers specifically to women whose husbands have died. It does not refer to men whose wives have died. Alternate translation: “to women who are widowed” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### if

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that people might **remain** as Paul is or they might not. He specifies that it is **good** if they do **remain**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by using a relative clause. Alternate translation: “whenever” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### remain as I also am

Just as in 7:7, Paul again assumes that his readers know that he is unmarried. When Paul says that it is good for **the unmarried** and **the widows** to **remain as I also am**, he is referring to how he is unmarried. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **remain as I also am** by including the fact that Paul is not married. Alternate translation: “remain without a spouse, as I also am” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)



## 1 Corinthians 7:9

### if they do not have self-control, they should marry

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that people might **have self-control** or they might not. Here he gives instructions for if they **do not have self-control**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by using a relative clause. Alternate translation: “whoever does not have self-control should marry” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### they do not have self-control

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **self-control**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as “self-controlled” or a verbal phrase such as “control themselves.” Alternate translation: “they are not self-controlled” or “they do not control themselves” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### they should marry

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “let” or “should,” as the ULT does. Alternate translation: “let them marry” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### to burn

Here, **to burn** is a way to refer to sexual desire. Paul uses **burn** because he represents the desire as hard to fight and as something that consumes a person like fire consumes a building. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or by including a reference to sexual desire. Alternate translation: “to burn with desire” or “to lust after someone” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:10

### to the married

Paul is using the adjective **married** 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 **married** with a noun phrase or a relative clause. Alternate translation: “to those who are married” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### not I, but the Lord

Here Paul clarifies that he is not the authority behind this command. It is **the Lord** who is the authority here. Paul specifically has in mind what **the Lord** said about marriage and divorce while he was on earth (See: [Mark 10:5–12](#)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **not I, but the Lord** either by identifying that it is not Paul “alone” who gives the command, or by clarifying that Paul is referring to what **the Lord** said. Alternate translation: “not I alone, but the Lord also” or “and here I refer to what the Lord said” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### a wife & from her husband

Here Paul is speaking of wives and husbands in general, not just of one **wife** and **husband**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **wife** and **husband** with a comparable way to refer generically to wives and husbands. Alternate translation: “each wife ... from her husband” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### is not to be separated from

Here, **to be separated from** is technical language for ending a marriage before death. The phrase does not distinguish between “separation” and “divorce.” If possible, use a similar general phrase in your language. Alternate translation: “is not to divorce or separate from” or “is not to leave” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### is not to be separated

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the **wife**, who is **separated**, rather than the person doing the “separating.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that the **wife** does it herself. Alternate translation: “is not to separate” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:11

### but even if she might be separated, let her remain unmarried, or let her be reconciled to the husband

The ULT puts this clause in parentheses because it is a qualification of what Paul said in 7:11 and because one can read 7:10-11 smoothly together without this clause. In this clause, Paul issues commands about what the wife is supposed to do if she divorces her husband despite what Paul has said. Use a form in your language that would indicate a qualification or a parenthesis. Alternate translation: “if she is separated despite what I have said, let her remain unmarried, or let her be reconciled to the husband” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### she might be separated, & to the husband), & a husband & a wife

Here Paul is speaking of wives and husbands in general, not just of one **wife** and **husband**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **wife** and **husband** with a comparable way to refer generically to wives and husbands. Alternate translation: “one of the wives might be separated ... to her husband ... each husband ... his wife” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### but even if she might be separated, let her remain

Here Paul uses **even if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that a wife **might be separated**, or she might not. He then specifies the result if **she is separated**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by introducing it with a word such as “whenever” or with a relative clause. Alternate translation: “but let whichever wife might be separated remain” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### she might be separated

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the “wife” who is **separated**, rather than focusing on the person doing the “separating.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that the “wife” does it herself. Alternate translation: “she separates” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### she might be separated

Here Paul omits some words that might be needed in your language to make a complete thought. Paul omits them because he already used them in 7:10 and he assumes his audience will infer them from there. If you need to include these words, you could insert the words “from her husband.” Alternate translation: “she might be separated from her husband” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### let her remain unmarried, or let her be reconciled to the husband

Here Paul uses two third-person imperatives. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use them here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea by using a word such as “should” or “must.” Alternate translation: “she must remain unmarried, or she must be reconciled to the husband” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### let her be reconciled to the husband

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the “wife,” who is **reconciled**,

rather than focusing on the person doing the “reconciling.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that the “wife” does it herself. Alternate translation: “let her reconcile with the husband” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### **a husband is not to divorce a wife**

Alternate translation: “a husband should not divorce a wife”

## 1 Corinthians 7:12

### to the rest

Here, **the rest** could refer to: (1) people in situations other than those already named, particularly those who are married to an unbelieving spouse. Alternate translation: “to the rest of those who are married” (2) everything else Paul is about to say. Alternate translation: “about other situations”

### I, not the Lord

Here, **I, not the Lord** is the opposite of what Paul said in 7:10. Paul wishes to clarify that he is the authority behind this command. Of course, **the Lord** made him an apostle and gave him authority, but he wants the Corinthians to know that he is speaking out of that authority here, and he is not referring to what **the Lord** said while he was on earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **I, not the Lord** either by identifying that it is Paul alone who gives the command, or by clarifying that **the Lord** did not say anything about this topic. Alternate translation: “I alone” or “on my own authority, since the Lord did not speak about this topic” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### if any brother has an unbelieving wife, and she agrees to live with him, let him not divorce

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that a **brother** might have **an unbelieving wife**, and she might agree **to live with him**, or this situation might not happen. He then specifies the result if this situation does happen. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by introducing it with a word such as “whenever” or by using a relative clause. Alternate translation: “but let any brother who has an unbelieving wife who agrees to live with him not divorce” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### to live with him

Here, **to live with him** refers to staying married. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **to live with him** with a comparable idiom that refers to staying married. Alternate translation: “to stay with him” or “to remain married to him” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### let him not divorce her

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “must” or “should.” Alternate translation: “he must not divorce her” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:13

### **if any woman has an unbelieving husband, and he agrees to live with her, let her not divorce**

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that a **woman** might have **an unbelieving husband**, and he might agree **to live with her**, or this situation might not happen. He then specifies the result if this situation does happen. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by introducing it with a word such as “whenever” or by using a relative clause. Alternate translation: “but let any woman who has an unbelieving husband who agrees to live with her not divorce” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### **to live with her**

Here, **to live with her** refers to staying married. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **to live with her** with a comparable idiom that refers to staying married. Alternate translation: “to stay with her” or “to remain married to her” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### **let her not divorce the husband**

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “must” or “should.” Alternate translation: “she must not divorce the husband” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:14

### For

Here, **For** introduces the reason or basis for Paul's commands in 7:12-13. When one spouse is not a believer, Paul wants them to stay together, and the reason is that the unbelieving spouse is **sanctified**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **For** with a word or phrase that introduces the basis for a command. Alternate translation: "You should do this because" (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### the unbelieving husband & through the wife, & the unbelieving wife & through the brother

Here Paul is speaking of wives and husbands in general, not just of one **wife** and **husband**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **wife** and **husband** with a comparable way to refer generically to wives and husbands. Alternate translation: "any unbelieving husband ... through his wife ... any unbelieving wife ... through her husband" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### the unbelieving husband is sanctified through the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through the brother

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **sanctified** rather than the person doing the "sanctifying." If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that "God" does it. Alternate translation: "God sanctifies the unbelieving husband through the wife, and God sanctifies the unbelieving wife through the brother" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### is sanctified & is sanctified

Here, **sanctified** is a reference to purity. It does not mean that the **unbelieving husband** or **unbelieving wife** is considered to be a believer. Rather, Paul's point is that the believing spouse is not made unclean by the unbelieving spouse. Just the opposite: the marriage is clean and pure because of the believing spouse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **sanctified** with a word or phrase that identifies an acceptable or pure marriage partner. Alternate translation: "is made clean ... is made clean" or "is considered an acceptable spouse ... is considered an acceptable spouse" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### the brother

Here, **the brother** refers to a believing man, in this case the believing husband. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the brother** by clarifying that **the brother** is the **unbelieving wife's** spouse. Alternate translation: "the husband" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### Otherwise your children are unclean

Here, **Otherwise** refers to what the situation would be like if what Paul has just said were not true. Paul does not actually think that **your children are unclean**, but that would be true if he was wrong about the unbelieving spouse being **sanctified**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Otherwise** with a form that refers to a situation that the author thinks is not true. Alternate translation: "If that were not so, your children would be unclean" (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

## **your**

Here, **your** refers to anyone among the Corinthians who has an unbelieving spouse. Thus, it refers back to **the wife** and **the brother**. If your language would not use **your** in this situation, you could use **their** instead. Alternate translation: “their” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.687)**)

## **but now they are holy**

Here, **but now** provides the contrast with **Otherwise your children are unclean**. The word **now** does not refer to time but rather identifies that what Paul has said about the unbelieving spouse being **sanctified** really is true. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **now** with a word or phrase that identifies that what Paul has said is true. Alternate translation: “but since the unbelieving spouse is sanctified, they are holy” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

## **unclean, & holy**

Here, **holy** is a reference to purity, and **unclean** is a reference to impurity. The word **holy** does not mean that the **children** are considered to be believers. Rather, Paul’s point is that the **children** are not made **unclean** by having an unbelieving parent. Just the opposite: the **children** are clean and pure because of the believing parent. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **unclean** and **holy** with words or phrases that identify the **children** as those born in a “clean” or “honorable” way. Alternate translation: “not pure ... pure” or “dishonored ... honorable” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)



## 1 Corinthians 7:15

### if the unbeliever departs, let him go

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that **the unbeliever** might depart, or he or she might not. He then specifies the result for if **the unbeliever departs**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by using a relative clause. Alternate translation: “whichever unbeliever departs, let him go” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### if the unbeliever departs, let him go

Here, **departs** refers to ending the marriage, that is, leaving the spouse. The phrase **let him go** refers to allowing the spouse to break the marriage or leave. If these words would not refer to breaking a marriage or getting divorced in your language, you could use a comparable expression. Alternate translation: “if the unbeliever wants a divorce, let him divorce you” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### the unbeliever & let him go

Although **him** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer back to **the unbeliever**, which could refer to either a man or a woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **him** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “the unbeliever ... let him or her go” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### the unbeliever & the brother or the sister

Here Paul is speaking of unbelievers, brothers, and sisters in general and not of just one **unbeliever, brother, or sister**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these words with a comparable way to refer generically to unbelievers, brothers, and sisters. Alternate translation: “one of the unbelievers ... the brother or the sister involved” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### let him go

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “allow.” Alternate translation: “allow him to go” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### the brother or the sister is not bound

Here, **bound** could refer to: (1) the marriage with an unbelieving spouse. Paul is saying that the **brother or the sister** does not need to try to preserve the marriage. They are not **bound** to the unbeliever but can accept the divorce. Alternate translation: “the brother or the sister is not bound to the unbeliever” (2) the rules that Paul laid out for staying with a spouse in **7:10–13**. Paul is saying that **the brother or the sister** does not have to follow those rules about staying with a spouse, and perhaps he is even saying that they can marry someone else. Alternate translation: “the brother or the sister is not bound to remain unmarried” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### the brother or the sister

Here Paul uses **brother** and **sister** to identify the people involved as believers of both genders. The people he refers to are **brother** and **sister** of the Corinthian believers, not of the **unbeliever**. Rather, **the brother or the sister** is married to the **unbeliever**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the brother or the**

**sister** with a word or phrase that refers to believing husbands and wives. Alternate translation: “the believing husband or wife” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## the brother or the sister is not bound

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **not bound** rather than focusing on what does the “binding.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “the marriage” does not bind the **brother** or **sister**. Alternate translation: “the brother or the sister is free” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## but

Here, **but** introduces how Paul wants the Corinthians to act in general. Whether their spouse leaves or not, they should act in **peace**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **but** by using a word or phrase that introduces a general principle. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a period before it. Alternate translation: “In every case,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

## peace

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **peace**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as “peaceful” or an adverb such as “peaceably.” Alternate translation: “act peaceably” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:16

### do you know, & you will save the husband? & do you know, & you will save the wife

Here Paul addresses each individual woman within the Corinthian church. Because of this, **you** in this verse is always singular. (See: **Forms of 'You' — Singular (p.690)**)

### how do you know, woman, whether you will save the husband? Or how do you know, man, whether you will save the wife

Paul does not ask these questions because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks them to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The questions assume that the answer is “we do not know for sure.” If these questions would be confusing for your readers, you could express the ideas by using statements. Paul could be using these questions to show the Corinthians that: (1) they should have little confidence about unbelieving spouses becoming Christians. The questions thus support how Paul allows divorces initiated by an unbelieving spouse in 7:15. Alternate translation: “you cannot know, woman, that you will save the husband. And you cannot know, man, that you will save the wife.” (2) show the Corinthians that they should have much confidence about unbelieving spouses becoming Christians. The questions thus support how Paul says that the unbelieving spouse is “holy” in 7:14. Alternate translation: “you could not know, woman, but you may save the husband. And you could not know, man, but you may save the wife.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### For how do you know, woman, whether & how do you know, man, whether

Here, the words **woman** and **man** are direct addresses to people in the audience. If your language would put these words somewhere else in the sentence, you could move them to where they sound natural. Alternate translation: “For woman, how do you know whether ... man, how do you know whether” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### how do you know, woman, whether you will save the husband? Or how do you know, man, whether you will save the wife

Here Paul directly addresses a **woman** and a **man** in the audience. The Corinthians would have understood him to mean a **woman** or **man** in their group who was married to an unbelieving spouse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **woman** or **man** by stating the direct address in a different way. Alternate translation: “how does any woman know whether she will save the husband? Or how does any man know whether he will save the wife?”

### woman, & the husband? & man, & the wife

Here Paul refers to **woman**, **husband**, **man**, and **wife** in the singular, but he is speaking generically of any person who fits into these categories. If your language does not use the singular form to refer to people in general, you can use a form that does refer generically to people in your language. Alternate translation: “each of you women ... your husband ... each of you men ... your wife” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### you will save & you will save

Here Paul speaks of husbands or wives leading their spouses to faith in Jesus as “saving” them. By this, Paul means that the **woman** or **man** is the means by which God will **save** the **husband** or **wife**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **you will save** with a word or phrase that refers to leading someone towards

“salvation,” that is, helping them to believe in Jesus. Alternate translation: “God will use you to save ... God will use you to save” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:17

### However

Here, **However** acknowledges the exception about “walking” **as the Lord has assigned to each one** that he just included: if an unbelieving spouse wishes to divorce a believing spouse, that is permissible. Paul acknowledges this exception but wishes to emphasize the main point: the believers should remain in the state they are in. If **However** would not have the meaning of acknowledging an exception to a claim, you could use a word or phrase that does do so. Alternate translation: “In every other case” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each one, thus let him walk

If your language would state the command to **walk** before explaining how to **walk**, you could rearrange these clauses so that they read more naturally. Alternate translation: “let each one walk as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each one” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### as the Lord has assigned

Here Paul omits some words that might be needed in your language to make a complete sentence. If necessary, you could include what it is that **the Lord has assigned** by using a word such as “task” or “position.” Alternate translation: “as the Lord has assigned a position” or “as the Lord has assigned a task” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### let him walk

Paul speaks of behavior in life as if it were “walking.” If **let him walk** would not be understood as a description of a person’s way of life in your language, you could express the idea plainly or with a comparable metaphor. Alternate translation: “let him live his life” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### let him walk

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “must.” Alternate translation: “he must walk” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### let him walk

Here, **he** is written in masculine form, but it refers to anyone, no matter what their gender might be. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **he** by using a word that does not have gender, or you could use both genders. Alternate translation: “let him or her walk” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### And in this way I direct in all the churches

Alternate translation: “This is what I require from all the churches”

## 1 Corinthians 7:18

### Let him not be uncircumcised. & Let him not be circumcised

Here Paul is speaking of male circumcision only. Therefore, the masculine words in this verse should be retained in translation if possible. (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### Was anyone called, having been circumcised? Let him not be uncircumcised

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to identify people who fit into the situation he describes. If someone answered “yes” to this question, then the following command applies to them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question with a different way to identify to whom the command applies. Alternate translation: “If anyone was called, having been circumcised, let him not be uncircumcised.” or “Some of you were called, having been circumcised. If that is you, do not be uncircumcised.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### Was anyone called, & Was anyone called

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **called** rather than focusing on the person doing the “calling.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “Did God call anyone ... Did God call anyone” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### having been circumcised

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **circumcised** rather than focusing on the person doing the “circumcising.” If you must state who does the action, you can use an indefinite or vague subject. Alternate translation: “someone having circumcised them” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### Let him not be uncircumcised

To **be uncircumcised** refers to a physical procedure by which one could make one’s penis appear to have a foreskin, even though one had been circumcised. If your language has a word for this procedure, you could use it here. If your language does not have such a word, you can use a phrase that identifies this procedure. Alternate translation: “Let him not hide his circumcision” or “Let him not undo his circumcision” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### Let him not be uncircumcised. & Let him not be circumcised

In this verse, Paul uses two third-person imperatives. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use them here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the ideas using a word such as “should” or “must.” Alternate translation: “He must not be uncircumcised ... he must not be circumcised” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### Let him not be uncircumcised. & Let him not be circumcised

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the person who is **uncircumcised**

or **circumcised** rather than the person doing the “uncircumcising” or “circumcising.” If you must state who does the action, you can use an indefinite or vague subject. Alternate translation: “Let someone not uncircumcise him ... Let someone not circumcise him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## Was anyone called in uncircumcision? Let him not be circumcised

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to identify people who fit into the situation he describes. If someone answered “yes” to this question, then the following command applies to them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question with a different way to identify to whom the command applies. Alternate translation: “If anyone was called in uncircumcision, let him not be circumcised.” or “Some of you were called in uncircumcision. If that is you, do not be circumcised.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## in uncircumcision

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **uncircumcision**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as “uncircumcised.” Alternate translation: “while uncircumcised” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p. 618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:19

### Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing

Here Paul says that both **Circumcision** and **uncircumcision** are **nothing**. He does not mean that **Circumcision** and **uncircumcision** do not exist. Rather, the Corinthians would have understood him to mean that **Circumcision** and **uncircumcision** do not have value or importance. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **nothing** with a comparable figure of speech or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "Circumcision has no value, and uncircumcision has no value" (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

### Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing

Here Paul repeats **is nothing** because this repetition was powerful in his language. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you can combine the two clauses and make the claim sound strong by using some other method. Alternate translation: "Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything" (See: **Parallelism (p.745)**)

### Circumcision & uncircumcision

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **circumcision** and **uncircumcision**, you can express the ideas by using adjectives such as "circumcised" and "uncircumcised." Alternate translation: "Being circumcised ... being uncircumcised" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### observance of the commandments of God

Here Paul omits some words that may be necessary in your language to complete the thought. If your language does require more words, you could infer them from the first half of the verse. Alternate translation: "observance of the commandments of God is everything" or "observance of the commandments of God is important" (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### observance of the commandments

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **observance**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "observe." Alternate translation: "observing the commandments" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### of the commandments of God

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **commandments**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "command." Alternate translation: "what God commands" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)



## 1 Corinthians 7:20

### Each one, in the calling in which he was called, let him remain in that

The order of elements in this sentence might be confusing in your language. If your language would structure this sentence in a different way, you could rearrange the elements so that they sound more natural. Paul has arranged the elements to emphasize **in the calling in which he was called**, so retain the emphasis on this element if possible. Alternate translation: “Let each one remain in the calling in which he was called” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### in the calling in which he was called

Alternate translation: “in the calling which God gave to him” or “in his own calling from God”

### he was called, let him remain

Here, the words translated **he** and **him** are written in masculine form, but they refer to anyone, no matter what their gender might be. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **he** and **him** by using words that do not have gender, or you could use both genders. Alternate translation: “he or she was called, let him or her remain” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### he was called

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the person who is **called** rather than focusing on the person doing the “calling.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God called him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### let him remain

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “must.” Alternate translation: “he must remain” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### let him remain in that

Here, **remain in** refers to faithfully serving God in a specific situation. In other words, Paul does not want them to try to change their social and economic situation. Instead, they should serve God in the situation in which God **called** them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **remain in** plainly or with a comparable metaphor. Alternate translation: “let him live his life in that” or “let him be content in that” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:21

### Were you called {& to you. & you are able

Here Paul addresses each individual person within the Corinthian church. Because of this, **you** in this verse is always singular. (See: **Forms of 'You' — Singular (p.690)**)

### Were you called {as} a slave? Let it not be a concern to you

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to identify people who fit into the situation he describes. If someone answered “yes” to this question, then the command that follows applies to them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question with a different way to identify to whom the command applies. Alternate translation: “If you were called as a slave, let it not be a concern to you.” or “Some of you were called as slaves. If that is you, let it not be a concern to you.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### Were you called

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **you**, who are **called**, rather than focusing on the person doing the “calling.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “Did God call you” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### Let it not be a concern to you

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should,” or you could rephrase the imperative. Alternate translation: “Do not be concerned about it” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### if indeed you are able to become free, then take advantage of {it

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that a person might be **able to become free**, or that person might not. He then specifies the result for if someone is **able to become free**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by using a relative clause. Alternate translation: “indeed whoever is able to become free should take advantage of it” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### take advantage of {it

Alternate translation: “use the opportunity that you have”

## 1 Corinthians 7:22

### For

Here, **For** provides support for the claim that Paul made at the beginning of the previous verse that those who are slaves should not be concerned by that (7:21). If it would be helpful in your language, you could make what **For** supports explicit. Alternate translation: “Do not be concerned about being a slave because” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship** (p.655))

### the one having been called in the Lord {as} & the one having been called as

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **called** rather than focusing on the person doing the “calling.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “the one whom God called in the Lord as ... the one whom God called” (See: **Active or Passive** (p.621))

### in the Lord

Here Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in the Lord** to describe the union of believers with Christ. In this case, being **in the Lord**, or united to the Lord, identifies the person **having been called** as someone who is united to the **Lord**. Alternate translation: “to be united to the Lord” (See: **Metaphor** (p.730))

### a freedman of the Lord

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe someone who is a **freedman** in the perspective of **the Lord**. In other words, while the person may be a slave in terms of human thinking, that person is a **freedman** before **the Lord**. If your language would not use the possessive form to express that idea, you could express the idea by speaking about the Lord’s “perspective” or “sight.” Alternate translation: “is a freedman in the Lord’s eyes” (See: **Possession** (p.750))

### a slave of Christ

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe someone who is a **slave** who belongs to **Christ**. In other words, while the person may be free in terms of human thinking, that person is a **slave** in relationship to **Christ**. If your language would not use the possessive form to express that idea, you could express the idea by using a phrase such as “belonging to.” Alternate translation: “a slave who belongs to Christ” (See: **Possession** (p.750))

## 1 Corinthians 7:23

### You were bought with a price

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **you**, who are **bought**, rather than focusing on the person doing the “buying.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God bought you with a price” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### You were bought with a price

Here Paul speaks as if the Corinthians were slaves whom God had **bought with a price** from someone else. Paul is speaking of what we often call “redemption.” The **price** is Christ’s death on the cross, which “redeems” believers from sin and evil powers. This is an important biblical metaphor so, if possible preserve the metaphor or express it as an analogy. Alternate translation: “you were bought with a price, which is the Messiah’s death” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### do not become slaves of men

Here Paul uses **slaves** as a description of anyone who follows and obeys someone else. Paul wants the Corinthians, whether they are **slaves** or “freedmen” in social and economic terms, to only obey and serve God, not **men**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **slaves** by clarifying that Paul has “serving” and “obeying” in mind. Alternate translation: “do not obey men” or “do not serve mere humans” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### of men

Although **men** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **men** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “of people” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:24

### General Information

This verse is very similar to [7:20](#). The main difference is that this verse refers to remaining **with God**, while that verse does not. With that exception, translate this verse so that it sounds similar to [7:20](#).

### each one in that which he was called, let him remain with God in this

The order of elements in this sentence might be confusing in your language. If your language would structure this sentence in a different way, you could rearrange the elements so that they sound more natural. Paul has arranged the elements to emphasize **each one in that which he was called**, so retain the emphasis on this element if possible. Alternate translation: “let each one remain with God in that which he was called” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### in that which he was called

Alternate translation: “in that which God gave to him” or “in what he received from God”

### Brothers, & he was called, let him remain

Although **Brothers**, **he**, and **him** are masculine, Paul is using these words to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Brothers**, **he**, and **him** with non gendered words or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “Brothers and sisters ... he or she was called, let him or her remain” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### he was called

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **called** rather than focusing on the person doing the “calling.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God called him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### let him remain

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “must.” Alternate translation: “he must remain” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### let him remain with God in this

Here, **remain with God in that** refers to faithfully serving God in a specific situation. In other words, Paul does not want them to try to change their social and economic situations. Instead, they should serve God in the situations in which God called them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **remain with God in that** plainly or with a comparable metaphor. Alternate translation: “let him live his life with God in that” or “let him be content serving God in that” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

# 1 Corinthians 7:25

## Now concerning

Just as in 7:1, **Now concerning** introduces a new topic that Paul wishes to address. Likely, the topics that he introduces in this way are what the Corinthians wrote to him about. Translate **Now concerning** here as you did in 7:1. Alternate translation: “Next, about” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

## I do not have a command of the Lord

Here Paul wishes to clarify that he is speaking out of the authority that he has as an apostle. He is not referring to anything that the Lord said while he was on earth, unlike what Paul did in 7:10. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **I do not have a command of the Lord** with the language of “authority” or “quotation.” Alternate translation: “I do not quote from the Lord” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## a command of the Lord

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **command**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “command.” Alternate translation: “anything that the Lord commanded” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## I give an opinion

Here, **I give an opinion** identifies that Paul is speaking from his own knowledge and authority. He wants the Corinthians to take this as strong advice, not as a command from God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **I give an opinion** with a word or phrase that indicates that what Paul says is not as strong as a command. Alternate translation: “I give my own view” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## I give an opinion

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **opinion**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “think.” Alternate translation: “I say what I think” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## having received mercy from the Lord

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on Paul, who has **received mercy**, rather than focusing on the **Lord**, who gives the “mercy.” Alternate translation: “one to whom the Lord has given mercy” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## having received mercy from the Lord

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **mercy**, you can express the idea by using an adverb such as “mercifully” or an adjective such as “merciful.” Alternate translation: “having received what the Lord has mercifully done to make me” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

# 1 Corinthians 7:26

## Therefore

Here, **Therefore** does not refer back to how Paul has received mercy from God. Rather, **Therefore** introduces the “opinion” that Paul said he was going to “give” (7:25). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Therefore** with a word or phrase that introduces a statement that one has already spoken about. Alternate translation, changing the comma to a colon or a period: “Here is my opinion:” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases** (p.662))

## this is good, because of the coming distress, that {it is} good

Here Paul repeats **good**, because in his language it was a natural way to remind the reader that he had already said **this is good**. If your language would not use repetition in this way, you could use only one **good**. Alternate translation: “that, because of the coming distress, it is good” (See: **Doublet** (p.676))

## this is good, because of the coming distress, that {it is} good for a man to remain as he is

Here Paul interrupts his sentence to include the reason why he thinks that this is **good** advice. He does this to emphasize **the coming distress**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate rearrange the sentence and represent the emphasis on **the coming distress** in another way. Alternate translation: “that it is good for a man to remain as he is. This is because of the coming distress” (See: **Information Structure** (p.716))

## the coming distress

Here, **coming** could refer to: (1) something that is about to happen. Alternate translation: “of the distress that will soon be here” (2) something that is already happening. Alternate translation: “of the present distress” (See: **Translate Unknowns** (p.780))

## the coming distress

Here, **distress** could refer to: (1) general suffering and persecution of the church throughout the world. Alternate translation: “of the coming general distress” (2) suffering and difficulties that the Corinthian believers are experiencing. Alternate translation: “of the distress coming on your group” (See: **Translate Unknowns** (p.780))

## for a man & as he is

Here, the words translated **man** and **he** are written in masculine form, but they refer to anyone, no matter what their gender might be. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **man** and **he** by using words that do not have gender, or you could use both genders. Alternate translation: “for a person ... as he or she is” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women** (p.785))

## to remain as he is

Alternate translation: “to stay in the position he is in”

## 1 Corinthians 7:27

### Are you bound & Are you released

Here Paul addresses specific individuals within the Corinthian church. Because of this, **you** in this verse is always singular. (See: **Forms of 'You' — Singular (p.690)**)

### Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek & Are you released from a wife? Do not seek

Paul does not ask these questions because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks them to identify people who fit into the situations he describes. If someone answered “yes” to one of these questions, then the following command applies to that person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these questions with a different way to identify to whom the command applies. Alternate translation: “If you are bound to a woman, do not seek ... If you are released from a woman, do not seek” or “Some of you are bound to a woman. If that is you, do not seek ... Some of you are released from a woman. If that is you, do not seek” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 766)**)

### Are you bound to a wife

Here, **bound to a wife** could refer to: (1) a man being engaged to marry a woman. Alternate translation: “Are you engaged to a woman” (2) a man being married to a woman. Alternate translation: “Are you married” (See: **Idiom (p. 710)**)

### Do not seek to be released

Here, **released** could refer to: (1) breaking off an engagement or betrothal. Alternate translation: “Do not seek to break off the betrothal” (2) ending a marriage. Alternate translation: “Do not seek a divorce” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### Are you released from a wife

Here, **released from a wife** could refer to: (1) someone who has never been engaged or married. Alternate translation: “Are you single” (2) someone who has been engaged or married but broken the marriage or engagement. Alternate translation: “Have you left your fiancée” or “Have you divorced your wife” (See: **Idiom (p. 710)**)

### μὴ ζητεῖ λύσιν. λέλυσαι ἀπὸ γυναικός

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **released** rather than focusing on the person doing the “releasing.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that either **you** or a “judge” does it. Alternate translation: “Do not seek to break up. Do you have no woman” or “Do not seek for a judge to release you. Has a judge released you from a woman” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### Do not seek a wife

Here, to **seek a wife** refers to searching for a **woman** to marry. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **seek a wife** with a comparable idiom or expression. Alternate translation: “Do not look for a wife” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)



## 1 Corinthians 7:28

### But

Here, **But** introduces an exception to Paul's general advice in the previous verse (7:27). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **But** with a word or phrase that introduces an exception. Alternate translation: "In fact, though," (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### you would marry, you have not sinned

Here Paul addresses specific men within the Corinthian church. Because of this, **you** here is singular. The **you** at the end of the verse is plural because here Paul has both the men and the women in mind. (See: **Forms of 'You' — Singular (p.690)**)

### if indeed you would marry, you have not sinned

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that a man might **marry**, or a man might not. He then specifies the result for if the man does **marry**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by using a relative clause. Alternate translation: "whichever man does indeed marry has not sinned" (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### if the virgin would marry, she has not sinned

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that a **virgin** might **marry**, or she might not. He then specifies the result for **if the virgin** does **marry**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by using a relative clause. Alternate translation: "whichever virgin marries has not sinned" (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### the ones of such kind

Here, **the ones of such kind** refers back to the man and **the virgin** who **marry**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the ones of such kind** by clarifying that it refers to married people. Alternate translation: "those who are married" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### will have distress in the flesh

Here, **distress in the flesh** refers to the same problems and troubles that Paul has already called "the coming distress" in 7:26. The phrase does not refer to marital problems or fights with one's spouse. Rather, it refers to extra **distress** that married people will experience while suffering under persecution and troubles. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **distress in the flesh** by referring to how you translated "the coming distress" in 7:26 and making the connection to that phrase clear. Alternate translation: "will experience the distress in the flesh that I have already said is coming" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### will have distress

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **distress**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "suffer." Alternate translation: "will suffer" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## I want to spare you {from this}

Here, **this** refers back to the **distress in the flesh**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **this** by clarifying that it refers to the **distress**. Alternate translation: "I want to spare you from this distress" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## want to spare you {from this}

Here, **to spare you {from this}** refers to Paul's desire to keep the Corinthians from experiencing the **distress** he has mentioned. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **to spare you {from this}** with a comparable idiom or expression. Alternate translation: "want to help you avoid this" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:29

### this I say

Here, **this** refers forward to what Paul is about to say. Paul refers to what he will say before he says it in order to emphasize what he is about to say. If your language would not use **this** to refer to something that will soon be said, you could use a word or phrase that does introduce something about to be said and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “listen to what I am about to say” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### brothers

Although **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “brothers and sisters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### The time is shortened

When **time is shortened**, an event at the end of that **time** is about to happen. In other words, something is about to happen. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **The time is shortened** with a comparable metaphor or a descriptive phrase. Alternate translation: “There is not much time left” or “The time until the event occurs is short” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### The time is shortened

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the **time**, which is **shortened**, rather than focusing on the person doing the “shortening.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God has shortened the time” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### The time

Here, **The time** could refer to the **time** until: (1) the events of the end times begin. Alternate translation: “The time until the end” or “The time until Jesus comes back” (2) the “distress” he has mentioned in 7:26, 28 begins. Alternate translation: “The time until the distress” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### so that from now on

Here Paul introduces how the Corinthians should behave now that the **time** has been **shortened**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **so that from now on** with a word or phrase that draws an inference or introduces a result. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a period before it. Alternate translation: “This means that, from the present on” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### should be as having none

Alternate translation: “should behave like those who have none”

## having none

Here, **none** refers back to **wives**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **none** by clarifying that it refers to **wives**. Alternate translation: “those having no wives” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:30

### **the ones weeping, as not weeping; and the ones rejoicing, as not rejoicing; and the ones buying, as not possessing**

Here Paul omits some words that may be needed in your language to complete the thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them in the last verse, and the Corinthians would have understood them from that verse. If your language does need these words, you could supply “should be as those” from [7:29](#). Alternate translation: “those who weep should be as those not weeping; and those who rejoice should be as those not rejoicing; and those who buy should be as those not possessing” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### **the ones buying, as not possessing**

Here Paul omits what the people are **buying** and are **not possessing**. If your language would state what is bought and possessed, you could include a general or vague object. Alternate translation: “those who buy things, as not possessing those things” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### **and the ones weeping, as not weeping; and the ones rejoicing, as not rejoicing; and the ones buying, as not possessing**

Alternate translation: “and those who weep should behave like those who do not weep; and those who rejoice should behave like those who do not rejoice; and those who buy should behave like those who do not possess”

## 1 Corinthians 7:31

### the ones using the world, as not using it

Here Paul omits some words that may be needed in your language to complete the thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them in [7:29](#), and the Corinthians would have understood them from that verse. If your language does need these words, you could supply “should be as those” from [7:29](#). Alternate translation: “those using the world should be as not using it” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### the ones using the world, as not using it

Here, **using** refers to taking something and doing work with it. Paul here refers to taking things that belong to the world and doing work with them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **using** with a word or phrase that refers to performing a task with something that one possesses. Alternate translation: “those doing things with the world, as not doing things with it” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### the world

Here, **the world** specifically focuses on people and things that belong to **the world**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the world** by clarifying that Paul is focusing on things that belong to **the world**. Alternate translation: “something worldly” (See: **Synecdoche (p.773)**)

### the present form of this world

Here, **present form of this world** refers to how **this world** is currently structured and how things work in **this world**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **present form** with a word or phrase that refers to how the world is right now. Alternate translation: “the current setup of this world” or “the way the world presently works” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### is passing away

Alternate translation: “will soon end”

## 1 Corinthians 7:32

### free from concern. & is concerned about

Here, **free from concern** and **concerned** are opposites. They both refer to consistently thinking about and worrying about things. Paul wishes the Corinthians to think and worry about as few things as possible. In line with that, the only thing the **unmarried man** thinks and cares about is **the things of the Lord**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **concern** and **concerned** with a word or phrase that refers to thinking and worrying consistently about something. Alternate translation: “free from worry ... is worried about” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### The unmarried {man}

Here Paul refers to **The unmarried {man}** in the singular, but he is speaking generically about any **unmarried {man}**. If your language does not use the singular form to refer to people in general, you can use a form that does refer generically to people in your language. Alternate translation: “Each unmarried man” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### The unmarried {man} & he might please

Here Paul is referring only to men. He will go on address unmarried women in [7:34](#). (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### is concerned about

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the **{man}** who is **concerned** rather than focusing on what makes him **concerned**. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that the **unmarried {man}** himself does it. Alternate translation: “concerns himself with” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### the things of the Lord

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **things** that are directly related to **the Lord**. This phrase identifies anything that one does that relates to **the Lord**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the things of the Lord** with a word or phrase that refers to anything related to **the Lord**. Alternate translation: “everything that concerns the Lord” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### how he might please the Lord

Here, **how he might please the Lord** further explains what being **concerned about the things of the Lord** means. If **how** would not introduce a further explanation in your language, you could use a word or phrase that does introduce such an explanation. Alternate translation: “that is, how he might please the Lord”

# 1 Corinthians 7:33

## the married {man}

Here Paul refers to **the married {man}** in the singular, but he is speaking generically about any married man. If your language does not use the singular form to refer to people in general, you can use a form that does refer generically to people in your language. Alternate translation: “each unmarried man” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

## is concerned about

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the **{man}** who is **concerned** rather than focusing on what makes him **concerned**. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that the **married man** himself does it. Alternate translation: “concerns himself with” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## the things of the world

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **things** that are directly related to the **world**. This phrase identifies anything that one does that relates to the **world**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the **things of the world** with a word or phrase that refers to anything related to the **world**. Alternate translation: “many things that relate to the world” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## the wife

Here Paul refers to **the wife**, but he specifically has in mind the wife of the **married man** already mentioned. If your language would not use this form to refer to the man's wife, you could express the idea more clearly. Alternate translation: “his wife” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

## he is divided

Here Paul speaks as if the man **is divided** into two pieces. By speaking in this way, Paul means that the **married man** has conflicting interests or concerns. He is concerned about how to please the Lord and how to please his wife. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **is divided** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “he is pulled in two directions” or “he is of two minds” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## he is divided

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **he** who is **divided** rather than focusing on what does the “dividing.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that the man's “concerns” do it. Alternate translation: “concerns about the Lord and the world divide him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## the unmarried woman or the virgin

Here Paul refers to **the unmarried woman** and **the virgin** in the singular, but he is speaking generically about **unmarried woman** or **virgin**. If your language does not use the singular form to refer to people in general, you can use a form that does refer generically to people in your language. Alternate translation: “each unmarried woman or virgin” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)



## the unmarried woman or the virgin

Here Paul could be distinguishing between: (1) older single women (**the unmarried woman**) and younger single women (**the virgin**). Alternate translation: “the older or younger single woman” (2) divorced women (**the unmarried woman**) and women who have never been married (**the virgin**). Alternate translation: “the divorced woman or the woman who has never married” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:34

### is concerned about

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **concerned** rather than focusing on what makes them **concerned**. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “the unmarried woman or the virgin” (7:33) does it. Alternate translation: “concerns herself with” (See: **Active or Passive** (p.621))

### the things of the Lord

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **things** that are directly related to **the Lord**. This phrase identifies anything that one does that relates to **the Lord**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the things of the Lord** with a word or phrase that refers to anything related to **the Lord**. Alternate translation: “everything that concerns the Lord” (See: **Possession** (p.750))

### both in the body and in the spirit

Here Paul refers to **the body** and **the spirit** as a way to refer to everything that a person is. The **body** is the outward part of the person, while the **spirit** is in the inward part of the person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **both in the body and in the spirit** with a word or phrase that emphasizes that the entire person is in view. Alternate translation: “in body and soul” or “in every part” (See: **Merism** (p.728))

### the one having been married

Here, **the one having been married** is feminine. If this is not clear for your readers, you could clarify that this phrase speaks about women. Alternate translation: “the woman who is married” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women** (p.785))

### is concerned about

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **concerned** rather than focusing on what makes them **concerned**. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that **the one having been married** does it. Alternate translation: “concerns herself with” (See: **Active or Passive** (p.621))

### the things of the world

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **things** that are directly related to **the world**. This phrase identifies anything that one does that relates to **the world**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the things of the world** with a word or phrase that refers to anything related to **the world**. Alternate translation: “many things that relate to the world” (See: **Possession** (p.750))

### the husband

Here Paul refers to **the husband**, but he specifically has in mind the husband of the **the one having been married** already mentioned. If your language would not use this form to refer to the woman’s husband, you could express the idea more clearly. Alternate translation: “her husband” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases** (p.692))

## 1 Corinthians 7:35

### this

Here, **this** refers back to what Paul has said about how unmarried people can serve the Lord better in 7:32–34. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **this** by clarifying what it refers back to. Alternate translation: “this about marriage and serving the Lord” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### for your own benefit

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **benefit**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “benefit” or “help.” Alternate translation: “to benefit you” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### any constraint

Here, **constraint** refers to a noose or rope that ties someone or something up and keeps them in one place. Paul uses this word to tell the Corinthians that he is not trying to “tie” them to either marriage or singleness. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **constraint** with a word or phrase that expresses the idea in another way. Alternate translation: “a noose” or “any hindrance” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### put any constraint on you

Here Paul speaks as if he could tie the Corinthians up and control where they went as if they were farm animals. Paul speaks in this way to refer to commands that require certain behavior, just like a rope requires an animal to stay in a certain area. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **put any constraint on you** plainly or with a comparable metaphor. Alternate translation: “tie you up” or “require one way of living” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### toward what {is}

Here, **toward** introduces the purpose of what Paul has said. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **toward what {is}** with a word or phrase that introduces what follows as a purpose or goal. Alternate translation: “in order that you may act in ways that are” or “with the goal of doing what is” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### what {is} appropriate and devoted

Here, **appropriate** refers to behavior that fits a situation or relationship properly. The word **devoted** describes someone who does a good job of helping someone else. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **appropriate and devoted** with words or phrases that express the ideas in another way. Alternate translation: “what is proper and helpful” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### without any distraction

Here, **without any distraction** means that nothing is hindering specific actions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **without any distraction** with a word or phrase that describes a situation in which nothing is hindering an action. Alternate translation: “without hindrance” or “with full attention” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## **without any distraction**

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **distraction**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “distract.” Alternate translation: “without being distracted” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:36

### he is acting improperly toward

This verse has two primary interpretations: (1) the fiancé interpretation, which suggests that the verse is about a man who is engaged to marry a woman. In this case, Paul is saying that the man should marry his fiancée if he thinks he is acting improperly and if she is of a certain age. (2) the father interpretation, which suggests that the verse is about a father who has a daughter. In this case, Paul is saying that the father should allow his daughter to get married if he thinks he is acting improperly and if the daughter is of a certain age. In the notes that follow, we will identify which choices match with which of these two major options.

### if anyone thinks he is acting improperly toward his virgin—if she is beyond the age of marriage and it must be so

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce two true possibilities. He means that a man might **be acting improperly**, or the man might not be. He also means that the woman might be **beyond the age of marriage**, or she might not be. He then specifies the result for if the man is **acting improperly** and the woman is **beyond the age of marriage**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by describing the specific situation. Alternate translation: “someone might think he is acting improperly toward his virgin, and she might be beyond the age of marriage. In this situation, it must be so” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### anyone

Here, **anyone** could refer to: (1) a man who is engaged to the **virgin**. This fits with the fiancé interpretation. Alternate translation: “any fiancé” (2) a father has a daughter who is a **virgin**. This fits with the father interpretation. Alternate translation: “any father” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### he is acting improperly toward

The phrase **acting improperly** is often used to refer to sexual impropriety, including shameful nakedness or improper sexual behavior. Therefore, **acting improperly** could refer to: (1) engaging in or wishing to engage in improper sexual behavior. This fits with the fiancé interpretation. Alternate translation: “he might have improper sex with” (2) wrongly prohibiting a daughter from marrying and thus shaming her. This fits with the father interpretation. Alternate translation: “he is wrongly shaming” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### his virgin

Here, **his virgin** could refer to: (1) a woman who is engaged to a man. This fits with the fiancé interpretation. Alternate translation: “his fiancée” (2) a daughter who has never married. This fits with the father interpretation. Alternate translation: “his unmarried daughter” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### she

Here, the word translated **she** could refer to a man or to a woman. If it refers to: (1) a woman, it identifies something about the woman as the reason for the man and woman to get married. This fits with both the father and the fiancé interpretations. (2) a man, it identifies something about the man as the reason for the man and woman to get married. This fits best with the fiancé interpretation. Alternate translation: “he” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## is beyond the age of marriage

Here, **beyond the age of marriage** could describe: (1) a person who is older than the normal age at which a person gets married. This fits with both the father and the fiancé interpretations. Alternate translation: “is older than average to get married” (2) a person who has reached full sexual maturity. This fits with both the father and the fiancé interpretations. Alternate translation: “is fully matured” or “is ready to have sex” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## is beyond the age of marriage and it must be so—he should do

Here, **it** could refer to: (1) what Paul is about to say, which is **he should do what he wants**. Alternate translation: “is beyond the age of marriage—then this is how it must be: he should do” (2) the necessity of getting married. Alternate translation: “is beyond the age of marriage and it seems necessary to marry—he should do” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## he should do what he wants

Here, **he** could refer to: (1) the fiancé, who wants to get married. Alternate translation: “the fiancé should do what he wants” (2) the father, who wants his daughter to get married. Alternate translation: “the father should do what he wants” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## he should do what he wants

Here, **what he wants** could refer to: (1) how the fiancé wants to get married and have sex. Alternate translation: “he should get married as he wants to” (2) how the father wants his daughter to get married. Alternate translation: “he should give her in marriage as he wants to” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## he should do

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “must” or “let.” Alternate translation: “let him do” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

## let them marry

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “can.” Alternate translation: “they can marry” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

## let them marry

Here, **them** identifies the man and the woman who are getting married. This fits with both the fiancé interpretation and the father interpretation. Alternate translation: “let the man and the woman marry” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:37

### But if he is standing firm in his heart

Much like the previous verse (7:36), this verse has two primary interpretations: (1) the fiancé interpretation, which suggests that the verse is about a man who is engaged to marry a woman. In this case, Paul is saying that the man who decides not to marry his fiancée does **well**. (2) the father interpretation, which suggests that the verse is about a father who has a daughter. In this case, Paul is saying that the father who decides to keep his daughter from marrying does **well**. In the notes that follow, I will identify any choices that specifically match with these two major options. Follow the interpretation that you chose in the last verse.

### he who stands firm in his heart

Here Paul speaks as if a person's **heart** were a place in which he or she could "stand firm." By speaking in this way, Paul means that the person will not change what they have decided in his or her **heart**. It is as if they are standing **firm** in a specific location. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this figure of speech plainly or with a comparable metaphor. Alternate translation: "the one who settles on a decision" or "the one who firmly decides" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### in his heart, & in his own heart

In Paul's culture, the **heart** is the place where humans think and plan. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **heart** by referring to the place where humans think in your culture or by expressing the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "in his mind ... in his own mind" or "in what he has planned ... in what he himself has planned" (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

### under compulsion

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **compulsion**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "compel." Alternate translation: "through someone compelling him" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### having authority over his own will

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **authority** and **will**, you can express the ideas by using verbs such as "control" and "want." Alternate translation: "ruling over what he wants" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### he has decided this in his own heart—to keep his own virgin—he will do well

The order of these three phrases might be unnatural in your language. If the order is unnatural, you could reorder the phrases so that they sound more natural. Alternate translation: "he has decided in his own heart to keep his own virgin, this man will do well" (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### this in his own heart—to keep

Here, **this** refers forward to what Paul is about to say: **to keep his own virgin**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **this** by clarifying that Paul is talking about what he is about to say. Alternate translation: "in his own heart to do this—that is, to keep" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## to keep his own virgin

Here, **to keep his own virgin** could mean that: (1) the man does not marry his fiancée but leaves her as a **virgin**. This fits with the fiancé interpretation. Alternate translation: “to remain unmarried to his fiancée” (2) the father does not give his daughter in marriage but leaves her as a **virgin**. This fits with the father interpretation. Alternate translation: “not to give his daughter in marriage” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## he will do well

Here Paul omits what it is that is done **well**. The Corinthians would have inferred from the verse that Paul means that keeping **his own virgin** is what he does **well**. If your readers would not make this inference, you could clarify what is done **well**. Alternate translation: “he is right to do this” or “this is a good choice” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## he will do

Here Paul uses the future tense to identify something that is true in general. If your language would not use the future tense for something that is generally true, you could use whatever tense is natural here. Alternate translation: “he does” (See: **Predictive Past (p.754)**)



## 1 Corinthians 7:38

### the one marrying & the one not marrying

Paul uses the words **the one marrying** and **the one not marrying** to speak of people in general, not one specific man. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of these words with a form that indicates people in general. Alternate translation: “anyone who marries ... anyone who does not marry” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### the one marrying his own virgin

Here Paul could be referring to: (1) a man marrying his fiancée. This fits with the fiancé interpretation. Alternate translation: “the man who marries his fiancée” (2) a father giving his daughter in marriage. This fits with the father interpretation. Alternate translation: “a father who give his daughter in marriage” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### the one not marrying

Here Paul could be referring to: (1) a man not marrying his fiancée. This fits with the fiancé interpretation. Alternate translation: “the man who does not marry his fiancée” (2) a father not giving his daughter in marriage. This fits with the father interpretation. Alternate translation: “a father who does not give his daughter in marriage” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### will do

Here Paul uses the future tense to identify something that is true in general. If your language would not use the future tense for something that is generally true, you could use whatever tense is natural here. Alternate translation: “does” (See: **Predictive Past (p.754)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:39

### is bound for

Here, **bound** refers to the legal and moral obligation to remain married. This obligation is strong enough that Paul can speak about it as if it were a rope that **bound** the man and the woman together. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **bound** plainly or with a comparable metaphor. Alternate translation: “is required to stay with her husband” or “is spoken for” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### A wife is bound

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the **wife**, who is **bound**, rather than the person doing the “binding.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” or the “law” does it. Alternate translation: “A wife must remain married” or “God’s law binds a wife” (See: **Active or Passive (p. 621)**)

### if the husband dies, she is free

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that **the husband** might die or he might not. He then specifies the result for **if the husband dies**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by using a relative clause. Alternate translation: “any wife whose husband dies is free” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### she is free to marry whomever she wishes, but only in the Lord

If it would appear in your language that Paul was making a statement here and then contradicting it, you could reword this to avoid using this form. Alternate translation: “she is free to marry whomever she wishes as long as they are in the Lord” (See: **Connect — Exception Clauses (p.646)**)

### in the Lord

Here Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in the Lord** to describe the union of believers with Christ. In this case, being **in the Lord**, or united to the Lord, identifies the person as someone who believes in Jesus. Alternate translation: “if they believe in the Lord” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 7:40

### according to my judgment

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **judgment**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “judge.” Alternate translation: “I judge that” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### she would remain as she is

Here Paul is referring back to the wife from the previous verse (7:39) whose husband had died. By **remain as she is**, Paul means “remain unmarried after her husband died.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **remain as she is** by clarifying that the wife from the previous verse is in view. Alternate translation: “she remains unmarried” or “she does not marry again” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### I also have the Spirit of God

This could mean that: (1) Paul thinks his **judgment** is backed up by **the Spirit of God**. Alternate translation: “I have the Spirit of God supporting my judgment” (2) Paul wishes to say that he has the **Spirit of God** as much as the Corinthians do. Alternate translation: “I also, not just you, have the Spirit of God” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

# 1 Corinthians 8

## 1 Corinthians 8 General Notes

### Structure and Formatting

On food (8:1–11:1)

- The truth about food and idols (8:1–6)
- Respecting the “weak” (8:7–13)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

#### Things sacrificed to idols

In Paul’s culture, animals were often sacrificed to the gods. After the animal was slaughtered, the people who were participating in the worship would eat parts of the animal. In fact, for most people who were not wealthy, participating in worship with a sacrifice was one of the few situations in which they could eat meat. Throughout this chapter, Paul explains how the Corinthians should think about eating or not eating this meat. (See: **god, false god, goddess, idol, idolater, idolatrous, idolatry (p.795)**)

#### The “weak”

In 8:9, 11, Paul speaks about the “weak,” and in 8:7, 10, 12, he mentions a “weak conscience,” which is the conscience of the “weak.” The “weak” person or conscience considers eating things sacrificed to idols to be participation in idolatry, and thus, sinful. Perhaps “weak” was a word that the Corinthians were using for fellow believers who were not comfortable eating food sacrificed to idols. Paul urges the Corinthians to respect these “weak” people, even if it means never eating meat again. While Paul never uses the word “strong” in this section, the “strong” would probably be those who are comfortable eating meat sacrificed to an idol.

#### Knowledge

Paul refers to “knowledge” in 8:1, 7, 10–11 and to “knowing” in 8:2–4. Throughout the chapter, the one who has “knowledge” is contrasted with the one who is “weak.” In 8:4–6, Paul explains what this “knowledge” is about: while other people may name many gods and many lords, believers know that there is only one God and one Lord. Because of this “knowledge,” eating food sacrificed to idols has no significance, since there is only one God and Lord. Paul, however, urges the Corinthians to respect those who do not fully comprehend this “knowledge.” (See: **know, knew, knowledge, unknown, distinguish (p.802)**)

### Translation Issues in This Chapter

#### Building up

In 8:1, Paul contrasts what “knowledge” does (“puffs up”) with what love does (“builds up”). “Building up” in this verse refers to helping other Christians grow in their knowledge of God and care for each other. In 8:10, however, “building up” has a negative connotation. In this verse, the conscience of the “weak” is “built up,” which means that the “weak” person eats food sacrificed to idols despite his or her conscience says. “Building up” in this verse refers to strengthening a conscience so that one is able to do what one is uncomfortable with.

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Other “gods” and “lords”

In [8:4–5](#), Paul states that an idol is “nothing.” However, he also acknowledges that there are many so-called “gods” and “lords.” In [10:20–21](#), Paul will make his point more clearly: those who sacrifice to idols are actually sacrificing to demons. So, Paul denies the existence of other “gods,” but he thinks that the idols do represent something: demons. In this chapter, you could clarify that Paul is speaking about what other people call “gods” and “lords.” (See: **god, false god, goddess, idol, idolater, idolatrous, idolatry (p.795)**)

## 1 Corinthians 8:1

### Now about

Just as in [7:1](#), **Now about** introduces a new topic that Paul wishes to address. Likely, the topics that he introduces in this way are what the Corinthians wrote to him about. Translate **Now about** here as you translated “now concerning” in [7:1](#), [7:25](#). Alternate translation: “Next, about” (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases \(p.662\)](#))

### the things sacrificed to idols

Here Paul speaks about animals that are slaughtered, offered to a god, and then eaten. For many people in Paul’s culture, this was the only meat that was available for them to eat. In many cases, people would eat this meat at a god’s temple or shrine. However, sometimes the meat could be sold to people, who would then eat it in their homes. In the next few chapters, Paul will speak about whether and how Christians should eat or not eat this meat. If your language has a specific word or phrase for meat from an animal that has been offered to a god, you could use it here. If your language does not have such a word, you can use a descriptive phrase. Alternate translation: “meat from animals sacrificed to idols” (See: [Translate Unknowns \(p.780\)](#))

### the things sacrificed to idols

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what is **sacrificed** rather than focusing on the person doing the “sacrificing.” If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: “the things that people have sacrificed to idols” (See: [Active or Passive \(p.621\)](#))

### We know that we all have knowledge

Here Paul could be: (1) expressing his own view about **knowledge**. Alternate translation: “We know that we all indeed have knowledge” (2) quoting what the Corinthians said in their letter so that he can respond to it, much like he did in [6:12-13](#); [7:1](#). Alternate translation: “you wrote, ‘we know that we all have knowledge.’” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information \(p.626\)](#))

### we all have knowledge

Here Paul does not specify what the **knowledge** is about. It becomes clear in [8:4-6](#) that Paul is speaking about **knowledge** about other gods, specifically knowing that there is only one God and that other gods do not really exist. If possible, do not give further explanation of **knowledge** here, since Paul explains later in the chapter. If you must specify what the **knowledge** is about, you could clarify that it is about the **idols** or the topic of **things sacrificed to idols**. Alternate translation: “we all have knowledge about idols” or “we all have knowledge about this issue” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information \(p.626\)](#))

### we all have knowledge. Knowledge

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **knowledge**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “know.” Alternate translation: “we all know things. Knowing things” (See: [Abstract Nouns \(p.618\)](#))

## but love

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **love**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “love.” Alternate translation: “but loving other believers” or “but a loving action” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p. 618)**)

## love builds up

Paul here speaks as if believers were a building that one **builds up**. With this metaphor, he emphasizes that **love** helps other believers become stronger and more mature, just like building a house makes it strong and complete. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this figure of speech plainly or with a comparable metaphor. Alternate translation: “love enables other believers to grow” or “love edifies” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 8:2

### If anyone thinks he knows something, he does not yet know

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that someone might think **he knows something**, or that person might not think so. He then specifies the result that happens if the person does think **he knows something**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by using a relative clause or by introducing the sentence with “whenever.” Alternate translation: “Anyone who thinks he knows something does not yet know” or “Whenever anyone thinks he knows something, he does not yet know” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### he knows & he does not yet know & he ought

Although **he** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **he** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “he or she knows ... he or she does not yet know ... he or she ought” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p. 785)**)



## 1 Corinthians 8:3

### if anyone loves God, that one is known

Just as in the last verse, here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that someone might love **God**, or that person might not. He then specifies the result for if the person does love **God**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by using a relative clause or by introducing the sentence with “whenever.” Alternate translation: “anyone who loves God is known” or “whenever anyone loves God, that one is known” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### that one is known by him

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the person who is **known** rather than focusing on **God**, who does the “knowing.” Alternate translation: “he knows that one” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### that one & him

Here, **that one** refers to **anyone**, and **him** refers to **God**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these pronouns by clarifying to whom they refer. Alternate translation: “that person ... God” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## 1 Corinthians 8:4

### about

Here Paul repeats **about** from 8:1 to let his readers know that he is going to speak directly about **things sacrificed to idols** again. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the repetition of the phrase from 8:1 by clarifying that Paul is returning to the topic he introduced there. Alternate translation: “returning to” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases** (p.662))

### the eating of the things sacrificed to idols

Here Paul uses the possessive form to speak about **eating** meat **sacrificed to idols**. If your language does not use this form to express that meaning, you can express the idea by using a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: “eating things sacrificed to idols” (See: **Possession** (p.750))

### of the things sacrificed to idols

Here, **the things sacrificed to idols** refers to meat that has been offered to an idol. Translate this phrase the same way you did in 8:1. Alternate translation: “of meat from animals sacrificed to idols” (See: **Translate Unknowns** (p.780))

### of the things sacrificed to idols

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what is **sacrificed** rather than focusing on the person doing the “sacrificing.” If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: “of the things that people have sacrificed to idols” (See: **Active or Passive** (p.621))

### We know that an idol in the world {is} nothing and that {there is} no God except one

Here Paul could be: (1) expressing his own view about **an idol** and **God**. Alternate translation: “We know that an idol in the world indeed is nothing and that there is indeed no God except one” (2) quoting what the Corinthians said in their letter so that he can respond to it, much like he did in 6:12-13; 7:1. If you chose this option in 8:1, you should also choose it here. Alternate translation: “you wrote, ‘we know that an idol in the world is nothing’ and, ‘there is no God except one’” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information** (p.626))

### an idol in the world {is} nothing

Here Paul says that **an idol** is **nothing** in order to emphasize that idols are not really gods. He is not saying that images or statues do not exist. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **nothing** by clarifying that Paul is speaking about how **an idol** does not have the power or existence of the true God. Alternate translation: “an idol in the world is not really a god” (See: **Metaphor** (p.730))

### there is} no God except one

If it would appear in your language that Paul was making a statement here and then contradicting it, you could reword this to avoid using an exception clause. Alternate translation: “there is only one God” (See: **Connect — Exception Clauses** (p.646))

## except one

Here Paul does not directly quote from the Old Testament, but he uses words that would make any reader who is familiar with the Old Testament think about [Deuteronomy 6:4](#), where it is written that “the Lord is one.” If your readers would not make this connection, you could include a footnote or a brief reference to Deuteronomy.

Alternate translation: “except one, as Moses wrote in the Scriptures” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 8:5

### even if

Here, **even if** introduces a possibility that Paul does not believe to be true. In other words, Paul does not think that there are **many gods** and **many lords**. He does think that people speak about **many gods** and **many lords**. Thus, his main point is that, no matter how many **gods** and **lords** other people talk about, believers only acknowledge one God and one Lord (8:6). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **even if** with a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: “although it might be that” or “while some people claim that” (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

### there are so-called gods

Alternate translation: “people name many ‘gods’”

### gods, whether in heaven or on earth

Paul speaks, using **heaven** and **earth** in order to include them and everything in between. By speaking in this way, he includes every place that God created. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: “gods in all parts of creation” (See: **Merism (p.728)**)

### many “gods” and many “lords

Here Paul acknowledges that there are **many “gods”** and **“lords”**. He implies that **so-called** from earlier in the verse also applies here, so the ULT has put quotation marks around **gods** and **lords** to indicate that these are the names people use. Paul himself does not believe that what people call **gods** and **lords** really are those things; rather, 10:20–21 suggests that Paul thinks these **gods** and **lords** are actually demons. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express what Paul means by **“gods”** and **“lords”** with a form that indicates that Paul is speaking from someone else’s perspective. Alternate translation: “many so-called gods and many so-called lords” (See: **Irony (p.719)**)

## 1 Corinthians 8:6

### for us {there is} one God

In this verse, Paul does not directly quote from the Old Testament, but he uses words that would make any reader who is familiar with the Old Testament think about [Deuteronomy 6:4](#), just like he did in [8:4](#). The Old Testament passage says, “The Lord is our God, the Lord is one.” If your readers would not make this connection, you could include a footnote or a brief reference to Deuteronomy. Alternate translation: “we accept from the Scriptures that there is one God” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### the Father

**Father** is an important title that describes one person in the Trinity. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a comma before it. Alternate translation: “that is, the Father” (See: **Translating Son and Father (p.783)**)

### from whom {are} all things

Here Paul emphasizes that **God the Father** created all things and is their ultimate source. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **from whom {are} all things** with a phrase that identifies **God the Father** as the creator of everything that exists. Alternate translation: “who is the creator of the world” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### for whom we {are}

Here Paul emphasizes that the purpose for which **we** exist is to serve and honor God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **for whom we {are}** with a phrase that identifies **God the Father** as the goal or purpose of Christian life. Alternate translation: “whom we are to serve” or “whom we worship” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### through whom all {things are}

Here Paul emphasizes that the **Lord Jesus Christ** is the agent through whom **God the Father** created all things. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **through whom all {things are}** with a phrase that identifies the **Lord Jesus Christ** as the agent in the creation of everything that exists. Alternate translation: “through whom God the Father created all things” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### through whom we {are}

Here Paul could be expressing the idea: (1) that **we** exist because of what Christ has done by creating and then saving us. Alternate translation: “through whom we live” (2) that **we** have been saved and given new life by Christ. Alternate translation: “through whom we have new life” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 8:7

### this knowledge {is} not in everyone

Here Paul speaks as if **everyone** were a container in which **knowledge** could be stored, but some people do not have **knowledge** stored in them. He speaks in this way to show that not everyone understands what he has just said about how God the Father and Jesus are the only God and Lord. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea that **knowledge** is **not in** someone with a comparable phrase. Alternate translation: “not everyone knows this” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### in the custom of the idols

The Corinthians would have understood **the custom of the idols** to refer to regular practices associated with worshiping **idols**, including eating meat **sacrificed to idols**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **the custom of the idols**, by refer to worshiping idols “regularly.” Alternate translation: “regularly involved in worshiping idols” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### in the custom of the idols

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **custom**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “used to” or “accustomed.” Alternate translation: “accustomed to idols” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### until now

Here, **now** refers to the time since these people became believers. Paul means that these people worshiped idols until they became Christians, not until the time he writes this letter. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **until now** by clarifying that Paul is referring to when these people first believed in Jesus. Alternate translation: “until they believed in Jesus” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### sacrificed to idols

Here, the things **sacrificed to idols** refers to meat that has been offered to an idol. Translate this phrase the same way you did in 8:1. Alternate translation: “meat from animals sacrificed to idols” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### sacrificed to idols

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what is **sacrificed** rather than focusing on the person doing the “sacrificing.” If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: “things that people have sacrificed to idols” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### eat things as sacrificed to idols

This phrase could refer to: (1) whenever the people that Paul is talking about eat **things as sacrificed to idols**. Alternate translation: “happen to eat things sacrificed to idols” (2) how the people that Paul is talking about think that the **things as sacrificed to idols** actually belong to another god. Alternate translation: “eat meat as if it were sacrificed to idols that were real” (See: **Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship (p.660)**)

## their conscience

The word **conscience** is a singular noun that refers to all **their** consciences. If your language does not use singular nouns in that way, you can use a different expression. Alternate translation: “each of their consciences” (See: **Collective Nouns (p.635)**)

## being weak

Here, **being weak** identifies a **conscience** that easily leads a person to feel guilty. A **weak** conscience condemns some things that are probably acceptable before God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **being weak** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “being sensitive” or “which often condemns them” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## their conscience, being weak, is defiled

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **their conscience**, which is **defiled**, rather than focusing on who or what does the “defiling.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that the **things as sacrificed to idols** or “they” do it. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a comma before it. Alternate translation: “their conscience being weak, they defile it” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## 1 Corinthians 8:8

### food will not bring us near to God

Here Paul speaks as if **food** were a person who could **bring us near to God**. By speaking in this way, Paul discusses whether food can make our relationship with God stronger or not. Just like a person who cannot **bring us near** to someone so that we can know that person better, so food cannot make our relationship with God any stronger. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “food will not make our relationship with God any stronger” (See: **Personification (p.748)**)

### neither are we made to lack if we do not eat, nor do we abound if we eat

Here Paul contrasts “eating” and “not eating” while negating both sides of the contrast. If your language does not use this form, you can express the idea with two negative clauses. Alternate translation: “we are not made to lack if we do not eat, and we do not abound if we eat” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### neither are we made to lack if we do not eat, nor do we abound if we eat

Here Paul uses **if** twice to introduce true possibilities. He means that a person might **not eat**, or that person might **eat**. He specifies the result for each option. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statements by introducing them with a word such as “whenever” or by using relative clauses. Alternate translation: “neither are we made to lack whenever we do not eat, nor do we abound whenever we eat” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### are we made to lack & do we abound

Here Paul does not specify in what **we** might **lack** or **abound**. If possible, do not specify this in your translation. If you must clarify in what we might **lack** or **abound**, Paul implies that it is God’s “favor” or “grace.” Alternate translation: “are we made to lack God’s grace ... we abound in God’s grace” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### we do not eat, & we eat

Here Paul states a general principle, and he does not clarify what kinds of **food** he has in mind. If possible, do not specify what **we eat** in your translation. If you must clarify what **we eat**, you could include a vague or generic reference to “certain kinds of food.” Alternate translation: “we do not eat specific kinds of food ... we eat specific kinds of food” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)



## 1 Corinthians 8:9

### this authority of yours

Here Paul implies that their **authority** is over “food”, as mentioned in the last verse (8:8). The point is that food has no **authority** over believers, whether to make them more or less “near to God.” Instead, believers have **authority** over food and can thus eat whatever they want. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express what **authority** refers to here by clarifying that it refers to **authority** over “food.” Alternate translation: “this authority of yours over food” or “this authority of yours concerning eating” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information** (p.626))

### this authority of yours

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **authority**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “rule” or “manage” and include “food” or “eating” as the object. Alternate translation: “how you rule over food” or “how you manage your eating” (See: **Abstract Nouns** (p.618))

### this authority of yours

Alternate translation: “this authority that you have”

### for the weak

Much like in 8:7, **weak** identifies a person who easily feels guilty. A **weak** person thinks some things are wrong that are probably acceptable before God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **weak** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “for the sensitive” or “for those who often condemn themselves” (See: **Metaphor** (p.730))

### for the weak

Paul is using the adjective **weak** 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: “people who are weak” (See: **Nominal Adjectives** (p.738))

## 1 Corinthians 8:10

### if someone might see

Paul is speaking as if this were a hypothetical possibility, but he means that it will happen at some point. If your language does not state something as a condition if it will happen, and if your readers might think that what Paul is saying might not happen, then you can introduce the clause by using a word such as “when” or “after”. Alternate translation: “whenever someone might see” or “after someone sees” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.648)**)

### knowledge

Here Paul does not specify what the **knowledge** is about. However, it is clear from 8:4–6 that Paul is speaking about **knowledge** about other gods, specifically knowing that there is only one God and that other gods do not really exist. If you must specify what the knowledge is about, you could clarify that it is about the idols or the topic of things sacrificed to idols. Alternate translation: “knowledge about idols” or “knowledge about this issue” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### the one having knowledge

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **knowledge**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “know.” Alternate translation: “the person who knows” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### reclining to eat

In Paul’s culture, people ate lying down on their side (**reclining**). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **reclining to eat** with a word or phrase that describes the normal position for eating in your culture or indicate that the person is about to eat. Alternate translation: “about to eat” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### will his conscience, being weak, not be built up so as to eat the things sacrificed to idols

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “yes, it will be built up.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong affirmation. Alternate translation: “his conscience, being weak, will surely be built up so as to eat the things sacrificed to idols.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### his

Here, **his** is written in masculine form, but it refers to anyone, no matter what their gender might be. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **his** by using a word that does not have gender, or you could use both genders. Alternate translation: “his or her” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### will & be built up

Here Paul speaks as if **his conscience** were a structure that could be **built up**. By speaking in this way, he means that the **conscience** becomes more confident or stronger, just as a structure is stronger after it is **built up**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “will ... become stronger” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## will his conscience, being weak, not be built up

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are not **built up** rather than focusing on whatever does not “build them up.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that seeing the person with knowledge eating in an idol’s temple does it. Alternate translation: “will this not build up his conscience, which is weak,” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## being weak

Here, **being weak** identifies a **conscience** that easily leads a person to feel guilty. A **weak** conscience condemns some things that are probably acceptable before God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **being weak** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “being sensitive” or “which often condemns him” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## the things sacrificed to idols

Here, **the things sacrificed to idols** refers to meat that has been offered to an idol. Translate this phrase the same way you did in 8:1. Alternate translation: “meat from animals sacrificed to idols” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## the things sacrificed to idols

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what is **sacrificed** rather than focusing on the person doing the “sacrificing.” If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: “the things that people have sacrificed to idols” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## 1 Corinthians 8:11

### the one being weak, the brother for whom Christ died, is destroyed through your knowledge

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the person who is **destroyed** rather than focusing on what or who does the “destroying.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “you” or “your knowledge” does it. Alternate translation: “you, through your knowledge, destroy the one who is weak, the brother for whom Christ died,” or “your knowledge destroys the one who is weak, the brother for whom Christ died” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### the one being weak, the brother

Jesus is speaking of those who are weak and brothers in general, not of one particular person who is a **brother** and **the one being weak**. If your language does not use the singular form to refer to people in general, you can express the idea in a form that is more natural in your language. Alternate translation: “each one who is weak, who is a brother” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### the one being weak

Much like in 8:9, **the one being weak** identifies a person who easily feels guilty. A **weak** person thinks some things are wrong that are probably acceptable before God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **being weak** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “the one who is sensitive” or “the one who often condemns himself or herself” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### the brother

Although **brother** is masculine, Paul is using this word to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brother** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “the brother or sister” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### your

Here Paul addresses specific individuals within the Corinthian church. Because of this, **your** in this verse is singular. (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.690)**)

### knowledge

Here Paul does not specify what the **knowledge** is about. However, just as in 8:10, it is clear that Paul is speaking of knowledge about other gods, specifically knowing that there is only one God and that other gods do not really exist. If you must specify what the **knowledge** is about, you could clarify that it is about the idols or the topic of things sacrificed to idols. Alternate translation: “knowledge about idols” or “knowledge about this issue” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### through your knowledge

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **knowledge**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “know.” Alternate translation: “through what you know” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 8:12

### thus

Here, **thus** refers back to the series of actions and results in 8:10–11. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express what **thus** refers to by clarifying that it refers to the previous two verses. Alternate translation: “through your knowledge” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### thus sinning against your brothers and wounding their weak consciences, you sin against Christ

Here Paul means that whenever the Corinthians “sin against” and “wound” their **brothers**, they at the same time **sin against Christ**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the relationship between **sinning against your brothers and wounding their weak consciences** and **sin against Christ** by clarifying that they happen at the same time. Alternate translation: “any time you thus sin against your brothers and wound their weak consciences, you at the same time sin against Christ” (See: **Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship (p.660)**)

### and wounding

Alternate translation: “by wounding” or “because you wound”

### your brothers

Although **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non=gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “your brothers and sisters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### wounding their weak consciences

Here Paul speaks as if **consciences** were body parts that could be wounded. By speaking in this way, he emphasizes that the Corinthians who have knowledge are hurting the **weak consciences** of other believers as surely as if they had wounded their arms or bodies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **wounding their weak consciences** by clarifying that Paul means that the Corinthians who have knowledge are hurting **weak consciences** or making the **weak consciences** feel guilty. Alternate translation: “hurting their weak consciences” or “making their weak consciences feel guilty” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### weak consciences

Here, **weak** identifies **consciences** that easily lead people to feel guilty. These **weak consciences** condemn some things that are probably acceptable before God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **weak** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “sensitive consciences” or “consciences, which often condemn them” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 8:13

### food causes my brother to stumble

Here, **food** is spoken of as though it were a person who could cause someone **to stumble**. Paul speaks in this way to emphasize that the **food** is the key issue that leads to “stumbling.” If this might be confusing for your readers, you could clarify that the person who eats the food causes someone **to stumble**. Alternate translation: “how I eat causes my brother to stumble” (See: **Personification (p.748)**)

### if food causes my brother to stumble, I will certainly not ever eat meat

Here Paul uses the first-person singular in order to use himself as an example for the Corinthians to follow. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that this is why Paul uses the first person by clarifying that Paul is offering himself as an example. Alternate translation: “if food causes my brother to stumble, I, for one, will certainly not ever eat meat” or “take me as an example: if food causes my brother to stumble, I will certainly not ever eat meat” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.687)**)

### if food causes my brother to stumble

Paul is speaking as if this were a hypothetical possibility, but he means that it will happen at some point. If your language does not state something as a condition if it will happen, and if your readers might think that what Paul is saying might not happen, then you can introduce the clause by using a word such as “in cases where” or “since.” Alternate translation: “because food causes my brother to stumble” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.648)**)

### brother & brother

Although **brother** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brother** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “brother or sister ... brother or sister” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### my brother & my brother

Paul is speaking of “brothers” in general, not of one particular **brother**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **my brother** with a word or phrase that refers to “brothers” in general. Alternate translation: “any brother of mine ... any brother of mine” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### certainly not

The words translated **certainly not** are two negative words. In Paul’s culture, two negative words made the statement even more negative. English speakers would think that the two negatives form a positive, so the ULT expresses the idea with one strong negative. If your language can use two negatives as Paul’s culture did, you could use a double negative here. If your language does not use two negatives in this way, you can translate with one strong negative, as the ULT does. Alternate translation: “by no means” (See: **Double Negatives (p.673)**)

### meat

Throughout this section, the “things sacrificed to idols” refers primarily to **meat**, and eating this kind of **meat** was one of the only ways for most people to eat **meat** at all. Paul here is stating that he will give up **meat** in general, whether it is sacrificed to idols or not. He implies that he does this so that fellow believers, who do not know whether the **meat** has been sacrificed to idols or not, will not stumble. If it would be helpful in your language, you

could translate the implications here to make them explicit. Alternate translation: “meat, even if it has not been sacrificed to idols” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

# 1 Corinthians 9

## 1 Corinthians 9 General Notes

### Structure and Formatting

On food (8:1–11:1)

- Paul claims to be an apostle (9:1–2)
- Paul defends supporting himself (9:3–15)
- Paul explains why he supports himself (9:16–23)
- Paul on athletes (9:24–27)

## Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

### Receiving support from the church

Throughout the chapter, and especially in [9:1–18](#), Paul defends why he does not ask for or receive financial support from the Corinthians. From what he says in [9:3](#), it seems that some people were “examining” Paul, and they thought that how Paul supported himself was not appropriate behavior for an apostle. These people thought that if Paul was really an apostle, he would require support from the churches to whom he preached. The fact that Paul did not require this support suggested to these people that Paul did not really have authority. Paul, in response, argues that he could require support if he wanted to, but he thinks that working to support himself helps him proclaim the gospel better. Throughout the chapter, you could use words that refer to how churches support their leaders financially.

### The “right”

In [9:4–6](#), [12](#), and [18](#), Paul speaks about a “right” that he and others have. This “right” can be to travel with a wife, to eat and to drink, and most importantly, to receive support from the Corinthians. Paul uses the word “right” to indicate that he is able to require financial support and other help from the Corinthians. However, he also states that he does not use this “right” because he thinks that he is serving God better without making use of it. In your translation, use a word or phrase that indicates that Paul and the others have the authority and the ability to do and require certain things. (See: **authority** (p.793))

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Rhetorical questions

In [9:1](#), [4–13](#), [18](#), [24](#), Paul uses rhetorical questions. He is not asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to provide him with information. Rather, he is asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to think about how they are acting and what they are thinking. The questions encourage them to think along with Paul. For ways to translate these questions, look for the notes on each verse that include these kinds of questions. (See: **Rhetorical Question** (p.766))

### Farming metaphor

In [9:9–11](#), Paul applies an Old Testament law about farming to himself and others who proclaim the gospel. In [9:11](#), he speaks about “sowing spiritual things,” by which he means proclaiming the gospel. When he and others “sow



spiritual things,” they should be able to “reap material things,” by which he means financial support. If possible, preserve the farming metaphor here since it is related to the Old Testament law. (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## Athletic metaphors

In [9:24–27](#), Paul uses several metaphors that are based on athletes and athletic competitions. Paul speaks about “running a race” and how the winner receives a “wreath,” which was a crown made out of leaves. He also speaks about “boxing” and how a good boxer does not “box the air.” Finally, he refers to how athletes in general must exercise “self-control” as they train. Paul uses these athletic metaphors to indicate how he and all believers need to focus on the goal, which is the reward that God has promised. To reach this goal, believers must exercise “self-control,” just as athletes do. The point is for believers to live their lives so that they receive the reward from God, just like athletes focus completely on trying to win the prize, the “wreath.” Paul uses these metaphors across several verses, and they are very important for his argument. If possible, preserve the metaphors in your translation. If necessary, you could express them as analogies. See the notes on these verses for translation possibilities. (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### “I became (as) ... ”

In [9:20–22](#), Paul explains how he has “become as a Jew,” “as under the law,” “as without the law,” and “weak.” What Paul means is that he acts like these four groups of people when he is with them. He does this because he wishes to “gain” all these people for Christ. When you translate these verses, use a phrase that indicates that Paul is acting like a specific kind of person.

### Paul’s use of [Deuteronomy 25:4](#)

In [9:9](#), Paul quotes from [Deuteronomy 25:4](#), which forbids a farmer from “muzzling an ox” while it threshes grain. Paul then explains to the Corinthians that God is not concerned about oxen but is speaking for “us” ([9:9–10](#)). What he means is that the law should not primarily be applied to “oxen” but rather to those who proclaim the gospel. He is not saying that God does not have any concern for oxen. When you translate these verses, focus on maintaining the strength of Paul’s argument, but if possible allow the reader to see that God does also care for “oxen.” (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:1

### Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord

Paul does not ask these questions because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks them to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The questions assume that the answer to all of them is “yes.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these questions by stating the ideas with strong affirmations. Alternate translation: “I certainly am free. I certainly am an apostle. I have certainly seen Jesus our Lord. You are certainly my work in the Lord.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

#### free

Here, **free** could mean that Paul is **free** to: (1) eat whatever he wants. This connects this question with chapter 8. Alternate translation: “free to eat whatever I wish” (2) receive financial support from the believers he serves. This connects this question with the first half of this chapter. Alternate translation: “free to receive support from you” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

#### my work

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **work**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “labor.” Alternate translation: “whom I labor for” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

#### my work

Here, **work** refers to the result of the **work**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **work** by clarifying that what the **work** produced is the focus here. Alternate translation: “the result of my work” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

#### in the Lord

Here Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in the Lord** to describe the union of believers with Christ. In this case, being **in the Lord**, or united to the Lord, describes the **work** as what Paul does because of his union with the Lord. Alternate translation: “in union with the Lord” or “that I perform because I am united to the Lord” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:2

### If I am not an apostle to others, at least

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that **others** might think that he is **not an apostle**, or they might think that he is an apostle. He then specifies the result for if the **others** think that he is **not an apostle**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by introducing the statement with “perhaps.” Alternate translation: “Perhaps I am not an apostle to others, but at least” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### you are the proof of my apostleship

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **proof**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “prove” or “show.” Alternate translation: “you prove my apostleship” or “you show that I am an apostle” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### the proof of my apostleship

Here Paul uses the possessive form to speak about a **proof** that shows his **apostleship**. If your language does not use this form to express that meaning, you can express the idea by using a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: “what proves my apostleship” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### of my apostleship

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **apostleship**, you can express the idea by using a verbal phrase such as “I am an apostle.” Alternate translation: “that I am an apostle” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### in the Lord

Here Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in the Lord** to describe the union of believers with Christ. In this case, being **in the Lord**, or united to the Lord, describes the **proof** that the Corinthians provide as something that happens in union with the Lord. Alternate translation: “in union with the Lord” or “as you are united to the Lord” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:3

### My defense to the ones examining me

Here Paul uses language that would normally be used in the legal courts. The **defense** is what the persons accused would say to prove their innocence. The ones **examining** are the ones who are in charge of the court and make the decisions about who is guilty and who is innocent. Paul uses this metaphor to explain that he is defending himself against people who have accused him of acting wrongly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the legal metaphor plainly or with a comparable metaphor. Alternate translation: "My answer to those who accuse me" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### My defense to the ones

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **defense**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "defend." Alternate translation: "What I say to defend myself against those" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p. 618)**)

### to the ones examining me

Here Paul does not state how **the ones examining** him think he has acted wrongly. The previous verse suggests that it relates to his "apostleship" (6:21). Paul intentionally does not state the "charge" against him, so leave it unstated if possible. If you must state what the "charge" against Paul is, you could clarify that it relates to whether he is truly an apostle or not. Alternate translation: "to those who examine me about my apostleship" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### this

Here, **this** refers to what Paul is about to say, most likely including everything in the rest of this chapter. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **this** with a normal form in your language to speak about what you are about to say. Alternate translation: "what I am about to say" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:4

### Do we certainly not have a right to eat and to drink

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “yes, you do.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong affirmation. Alternate translation: “We most definitely have the right to eat and to drink.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### certainly not

The Greek words translated **certainly not** are two negative words. In Paul’s culture, two negative words made the statement even more negative. English speakers would misunderstand two negatives, so the ULT expresses the idea with one strong negative. If your language can use two negatives as Paul’s culture did, you could use a double negative here. If your language does not use two negatives in this way, you can translate with one strong negative, as the ULT does. Alternate translation: “by no means” (See: **Double Negatives (p.673)**)

### Do we & have

Here, **we** refers to Paul and Barnabas (See: 9:6). It does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.685)**)

### Do we certainly not have a right

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **right**, you can express the idea by using a verbal phrase such as “are able to” or “can require.” Alternate translation: “Are we certainly not able” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### to eat and to drink

Here, **to eat and to drink** refers not primarily to the physical process of “eating” and “drinking.” Rather, the phrase refers primarily to what is needed **to eat and to drink**, that is, food and drink. Paul is saying that he and Barnabas have **the right** to receive food and drink so that they can **eat** and **drink**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **to eat and to drink** by clarifying that Paul refers to “food” and “drink.” Alternate translation: “to food to eat and beverages to drink” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

### to eat and to drink

Although Paul does not explicitly say this, he implies that **we** have the **right** to receive the food and drink from the Corinthians. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express what Paul is saying by clarifying that the food **to eat** and the beverages **to drink** would have come from the Corinthians in support of Paul’s work. Alternate translation: “to be supported by you so that we can eat and drink” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:5

### Do we certainly not have a right to take along a believing wife, even as the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “yes, you do.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong affirmation. Alternate translation: “We certainly do have the right to take along a believing wife, even as do the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

#### Do we & have

Here, **we** refers to Paul and Barnabas (See: 9:6). It does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.685)**)

#### certainly not

The words translated **certainly not** are two negative words. In Paul’s culture, two negative words made the statement even more negative. English speakers would misunderstand two negatives, so the ULT expresses the idea with one strong negative. If your language can use two negatives as Paul’s culture did, you could use a double negative here. If your language does not use two negatives in this way, you can translate with one strong negative, as the ULT does. Alternate translation: “surely not” (See: **Double Negatives (p.673)**)

#### Do we & have a right

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **right**, you can express the idea by using a verbal phrase such as “are able to” or “can require.” Alternate translation: “Are we ... able to” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

#### to take along

Here, **to take along** refers to journeying with someone as a companion. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **to take along** with a word or phrase that refers to traveling with someone else. Alternate translation: “to travel with” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

#### the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas

Here, **apostles** could include: (1) Paul and Barnabas, the **brothers of the Lord, Cephas**, and many others who proclaimed the good news. Alternate translation: “the rest of the apostles, including the brothers of the Lord and Cephas” (2) just the “Twelve,” the primary **apostles**, which would include **Cephas** but not the **brothers of the Lord**. Alternate translation: “the rest of the twelve apostles and the brothers of the Lord—even Cephas”

#### the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas

Even though **Cephas** was one of the **apostles**, Paul mentions him separately to emphasize him as an example. He has already used **Cephas** as an example earlier in the letter (See: 1:12; 3:22). Perhaps the Corinthians were comparing **Cephas** and Paul. Be sure that the wording of your translation does not suggest that **Cephas** was not an apostle. Alternate translation: “the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord—even Cephas”

## the brothers of the Lord

These were Jesus' younger brothers. They were sons of Mary and Joseph. Since the Father of Jesus was God, and their father was Joseph, they were actually his half-brothers. That detail is not normally translated, but if your language has a specific word for "younger brother," you can use it here. Alternate translation: "the younger brothers of the Lord" or "the half-brothers of the Lord" (See: **Kinship (p.722)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:6

### Or do only Barnabas and I not have

The word **Or** introduces an alternate to what Paul asked in 9:4–5. Paul already spoke about what he thinks is true: he and Barnabas do “have the right” to receive food and drink, and they “have the right” to travel with a wife. Here Paul gives the incorrect alternative: they alone do not **have the right not to work**. He introduces this incorrect alternate to show that his earlier statements must be true. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Or** with a word that signifies a contrast or gives an alternative. Alternate translation: “Otherwise, would it not be true that only Barnabas and I do not have” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### Or do only Barnabas and I not have a right not to work

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “no, you do have the right.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong statement. Alternate translation: “Barnabas and I too certainly have the right not to work.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### do & not have a right not to work

Paul here includes **not** twice. In his culture, two negative words made the statement even more negative. English speakers would understand two negatives here, so the ULT expresses the idea with both. If your language can use two negatives as Paul’s culture did, you could use a double negative here. If your language does not use two negatives in this way, you can translate with one negative and express the other negative by stating the opposite. Alternate translation: “do ... lack the right not to work” or “do ... not have the right to refrain from working” (See: **Double Negatives (p.673)**)

### do only Barnabas and I not have a right

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind right, you can express the idea by using a verbal phrase such as “are able to” or “can require.” Alternate translation: “are only Barnabas and I not able” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### not to work

Here Paul refers to the privilege of receiving financial support from churches so that the person serving Christ does not have **to work**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express what Paul is speaking about by clarifying that receiving aid from others is in view here. Alternate translation: “to receive financial support” or “not to work because believers support us” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)



## 1 Corinthians 9:7

**Who serves as a soldier at any time at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its fruit? Or who shepherds a flock and does not drink from the milk of the flock**

Paul does not ask these questions because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks them to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The questions assume that the answer to all of them is “no one.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these questions by stating the ideas with strong negations. Alternate translation: “No one serves as a soldier at any time at his own expense. No one plants a vineyard and does not eat its fruit. No one shepherds a flock and does not drink from the milk of the flock.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 766)**)

### **his own**

Here, **his** is masculine because most soldiers in Paul’s culture were male. However, Paul is not emphasizing the gender of soldiers here. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **his** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “his or her own” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p. 785)**)

### **at his own expense**

Here, **expense** refers to the cost of food, weapons, and lodging for a soldier to “serve.” Paul’s point is that soldiers do not pay these costs. Rather, the one who controls the army pays these costs. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **expense** by clarifying that it refers to the costs of maintaining an army. Alternate translation: “by paying for his own cost of living” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:8

### Am I not saying these things according to men

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “no, you are not.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negation. If you do so, you will need to separate the first half of the verse from the second half. Alternate translation: “I am not saying these things according to men.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### men

Although **men** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to any humans, whether men or women. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **men** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “men and women” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### according to men

Here Paul speaks of **saying** things **according to men**. By using this phrase, he wishes to identify arguments made by people who think and act in only human ways. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the phrase **according to men** by using a word or phrase that refers to what unbelievers say and argue. Alternate translation: “according to what mere humans argue” or “according to this world” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### these things & these things

In both places where it appears, **these things** refers back to what Paul has said in 9:3–7 about his “right” to receive financial support from the Corinthians. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **these things** with a word or phrase that clearly refers back to what has already been said. Alternate translation: “those things ... those things” or “what I have said ... what I have said” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### or

The word **or** introduces an alternate to what Paul says in the first half of the verse. Paul could be **saying these things according to men**. However, with **or** he introduces what he thinks is actually true: **the law also says these things**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this use of **or** with another word that signifies a contrast or gives an alternative. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to end the first half of the sentence with its own question mark. Alternate translation: “Instead,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### or does not the law also say these things

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “yes, the law says these things.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong statement. If you do so, you will need to separate the second half of the verse from the first half. Alternate translation: “No, the law also says these things.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## the law

Here, **the law** refers specifically to the first five books of the Old Testament, often called the Pentateuch or “the law of Moses.” Make sure your readers can tell that Paul is referring to this specific **law** here. Alternate translation: “the Pentateuch” or “Moses’ law” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:9

### For it is written in the law of Moses

In Paul's culture, **For it is written** is a normal way to introduce a quotation from an important text. In this case, Paul clarifies that the quote comes from **the law of Moses**. It is specifically from [Deuteronomy 25:4](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express how Paul introduces the quotation with a comparable phrase that indicates that Paul is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: "For it can be read in the law of Moses" or "For in the book of Deuteronomy, in the law of Moses we read" (See: [Quotations and Quote Margins \(p.761\)](#))

### it is written in the law of Moses

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what **is written** rather than focusing on the person doing the "writing." If you must state who does the action, you can express it so that: (1) the scripture author writes or speaks the words. Alternate translation: "Moses has written in the law" (2) God speaks the words. Alternate translation: "God has said in the law of Moses" (See: [Active or Passive \(p.621\)](#))

### of Moses, "Do not muzzle an ox treading out grain

If your language does not use this form, you can translate the command as an indirect quote instead of as a direct quote. Alternate translation: "of Moses that you should not muzzle an ox treading out grain" (See: [Direct and Indirect Quotations \(p.668\)](#))

### Do not muzzle

The command from **the law of Moses** is addressed to specific individuals. Because of this, the command is in the singular. (See: [Forms of 'You' — Singular \(p.690\)](#))

### Do not muzzle an ox treading out grain

In Paul's culture, farmers often would make **oxen** walk or "tread" on harvested wheat to separate the kernels of grain from the wheat stalks. Some people would **muzzle an ox** while it is **treading out grain** in order to keep the **ox** from eating the **grain**. The point of the command is that the **ox** should be allowed to eat what it is working to produce: the **grain**. If your readers would not understand what this command is about, you could include a footnote explaining the context or add a short clarifying phrase. Alternate translation: "Do not muzzle an ox to keep it from eating the grain it is treading out" (See: [Translate Unknowns \(p.780\)](#))

### God does not care about the oxen, does he

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is "no, he does not." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negation. Alternate translation: "God does not care about the oxen." (See: [Rhetorical Question \(p.766\)](#))

### God does not care about the oxen, does he

Here Paul speaks as if God has no concern or interest in **oxen**. The Corinthians would have understood him to mean that the primary intent of the command he quotes is not about caring for oxen but rather caring for something or someone else. He specifies what the primary intent of the command is in the next verse: it is **for our**

**sake** (9:9). If it would be helpful in your language, you could soften Paul's question so that it argues that the command is not "primarily" or "mostly" about **oxen**. If possible, however, maintain the strength of Paul's statement, since he offers an explanation in the next verse. Alternate translation: "God does not mostly care about the oxen, does he" (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:10

### Or

The word **Or** introduces an alternate to what Paul says at the end of the previous verse (9:9). In that verse, he asked whether God cares about the oxen in this law. Since that is not the issue here, the **or** introduces what Paul thinks is actually true: the law is **entirely for our sake**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Or** with a word that signifies a contrast or gives an alternative. Alternate translation: "On the other hand," (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### Or is he speaking entirely for our sake

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is "yes, he is." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong statement. Alternate translation: "Actually, he is speaking entirely for our sake." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### is he speaking

Here, **he** refers back to "God" in 9:9. Paul assumes that God is the one who is **speaking** in the passage he quoted in the last verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **he** by clarifying that it refers to God speaking the "law of Moses." Alternate translation: "is God speaking" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### for our sake? & for our sake

Here, **our** could refer to: (1) everyone who believes, including the Corinthians. Alternate translation: "for the sake of us who believe ... for the sake of us who believe" (2) Paul, Barnabas, and others who proclaim the good news. Alternate translation: "for the sake of us who proclaim the gospel ... for the sake of us who proclaim the gospel" (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive 'We' (p.685)**)

### it was written

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what **is written** rather than focusing on the person doing the "writing." If you must state who does the action, you can express it so that: (1) the scripture author writes or speaks the words. Alternate translation: "Moses wrote it" (2) God speaks the words. Alternate translation: "God said it" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### that

Here, **that** could introduce: (1) the reason why **it was written**. Alternate translation: "because" (2) a summary of the content of what **was written**. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a comma before it. Alternate translation: "and it means that" (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### the one plowing & the one threshing

Paul is speaking of these people in general, not of one particular person **plowing** or **threshing**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to people in general. Alternate translation: "anyone who plows ... anyone who threshes" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

## in hope, & in hope of sharing the harvest

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **hope**, you can express the idea by using an adverb such as “hopefully” or a verb such as “expect.” Alternate translation: “hopefully ... hopefully expecting to share the harvest” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## in hope

Here Paul does not mention what the **hope** expects because he states it at the end of the verse: **sharing the harvest**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could explicitly state that **sharing the harvest** is what the **hope** expects. Alternate translation: “in hope of sharing the harvest” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## the one threshing, in hope

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them explicitly in the previous clause (**ought to plow**). If your language does need these words, you could supply them from that clause. Alternate translation: “the one who threshes ought to thresh in hope” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:11

### If we sowed spiritual things among you, {is it} too much if we will reap material things from you

In this verse, Paul applies the farming language he used in 9:9–10. When he and Barnabas “sow,” they should also “reap” the harvest. Paul clarifies that what they **sowed** was **spiritual things**, which means the good news. The **material things** that they can **reap** are money and support from the Corinthians. If your reader would misunderstand this application of the farming language, you could use analogies to clarify what Paul is referring to or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “Similarly, if we told you about the good news, is it too much if we receive material support from you?” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### we & we

Here, **we** refers particularly to Paul and Barnabas. It does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.685)**)

### If

Paul is speaking as if **we** “sowing spiritual things” was a 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 think that what Paul is saying is not certain, then you could translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: “Since” or “Given that” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.648)**)

### is it} too much if we will reap material things from you

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “no, it is not.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negation. Alternate translation: “it is by no means too much if we will reap material things from you.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### if

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that **we** could **reap material things from you**, though **we** might not do so. He specifies the result for if **we** do **reap material things**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by introducing it with a word such as “whenever” or “that.” Alternate translation: “that” or “whenever” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)



## 1 Corinthians 9:12

### If

Paul is speaking as if **others** “sharing” **the right over you** was a 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 think that what Paul is saying is not certain, then you could translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: “Since” or “Given that” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.648)**)

### shared the right over you

While Paul does not directly state this, the Corinthians would have understood **right** to refer to the **right** to receive financial support. If your readers would not understand **right** in this way, you could express the idea more clearly. Alternate translation: “shared the right to financial support from you” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### shared the right over you, {do} we & this right

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **right**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “able to.” If you do so, you may need to express an object, which here is receiving financial support. Alternate translation: “were able to require financial support from you, are we ... being able to require financial support from you” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### do} we not even more

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “yes, you do.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong affirmation. Alternate translation: “we certainly do even more.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### do} we not even more

Here Paul omits some words that may be required in your language to make a complete thought. If your language needs these words, you could supply them from the first half of the sentence. Alternate translation: “do we not share the right even more” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### do} we & we did & take advantage of & we endured & we might & give

Here, **we** refers to Paul and Barnabas. It does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.685)**)

### we endured everything

Here Paul refers to what he and Barnabas had to “endure” because they **did not take advantage** of receiving financial aid from the Corinthians. They had to work to support themselves, and they probably had to go without as much food and supplies as they would have liked. Some of the hardships that Paul and Barnabas endured appear in [4:10–13](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **everything** to make it more explicit. Alternate translation: “we endured serving without financial support” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## **we might not give any hindrance to the gospel**

In Paul's culture, to **give any hindrance** means to "delay" or to "block" something. Paul means that he would rather have **endured everything** than to have hindered **the gospel**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **give any hindrance** in a form that is more natural in your language. Alternate translation: "we might not hinder the gospel" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## **we might not give any hindrance to the gospel**

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **hindrance**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "hinder." Alternate translation: "we might not hinder the gospel" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:13

### Do you not know that the ones working in the temple eat from the things of the temple; the ones serving at the altar partake from the altar

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “yes, we know.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong affirmation. Alternate translation: “You know that those working in the temple eat from the things of the temple; those serving at the altar partake from the altar.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

#### the ones working in the temple

Here, **the ones working in the temple** refers to any person whose job takes place in or around the temple. Paul may specifically have the “Levites” or other “temple servants” in mind. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the ones working in the temple** with a word or phrase in your language that refers generally to anyone whose job is **in the temple**. Alternate translation: “the temple servants” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

#### from the things of the temple

Here, to eat **from the {hings} of the temple** means that these people eat some of the food that people donate to the **temple** or offer to God in **the temple**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the things of the temple** with a word or phrase that refers to what people have offered or given to **the temple**. Alternate translation: “from what people give to the temple” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

#### the ones serving at the altar

Here, **the ones serving at the altar** could be: (1) a specific group within **the ones working in the temple**, specifically the priests who work at the altar. Alternate translation: “particularly, those serving at the altar” (2) another way to speak about **the ones working in the temple**. Paul repeats himself to clarify exactly what eating **from the things of the temple** means. Alternate translation: “that is, those serving at the altar”

#### the ones serving at the altar

Here, **the ones serving at the altar** refers to the specific people who offered sacrifices on **the altar**. Paul may specifically have in mind the “priests.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the ones serving at the altar** with a word or phrase for the people who have the closest contact with God and who offer sacrifices to him. Alternate translation: “the priests” or “those who serve the most sacred things” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

#### partake from the altar

Here, to **partake from the altar** means that these people offer part of a sacrifice on the altar, but they also eat part of that sacrifice. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **partake from the altar** with a word or phrase that refers to eating part of what people offer to their god. Alternate translation: “eat part of what is sacrificed on the altar” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:14

### the Lord commanded

Here Paul refers to how Jesus said that a “worker deserves wages” when he sent people to proclaim the good news. See the saying in [Matthew 10:10](#) and [Luke 10:7](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could include a footnote to explain the reference to what Jesus said. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### to live from

Here, **to live from** identifies how a person should support themselves and acquire food and other necessities. For example, **to live from** carpentry would mean that the person makes money to pay for food and housing by doing carpentry. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **to live from** with a word or phrase in your language that refers to how a person makes a living or supports themselves. Alternate translation: “to support themselves on” or “to receive their income from” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### the gospel

Here, **the gospel** refers to: (1) the job or occupation of proclaiming **the gospel**. Alternate translation: “preaching the gospel” (2) the people who hear and believe in **the gospel**. Alternate translation: “those who believe the gospel” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:15

### have not taken advantage of

Here, **taken advantage of** refers to “making use of” a resource or “requiring” a specific behavior. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **taken advantage of** with a comparable phrase. Alternate translation: “have not made use of” or “have not required you to provide” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### have not taken advantage of {any

Here Paul uses two negative words in the Greek: “have not taken advantage of none.” In Paul’s culture, two negative words made the statement even more negative. English speakers would misunderstand these two negatives, so the ULT expresses the idea with one strong negative. If your language can use two negatives as Paul’s culture did, you could use a double negative here. If your language does not use two negatives in this way, you can translate with one strong negative, as the ULT does. Alternate translation: “have by no means taken advantage” (See: **Double Negatives (p.673)**)

### of these things

Here, **these things** could refer to: (1) the “right” or “rights” that Paul has to financial support from the Corinthians. Alternate translation: “of these rights” (2) all the reasons he has given in [9:6–14](#) for why those who proclaim the gospel should receive financial support. Alternate translation: “of these reasons” or “of these arguments” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### I do not write

Here Paul refers to 1 Corinthians itself, the letter he is currently writing. Use whatever tense in your language would be appropriate to refer to the letter itself. Alternate translation: “I have not written” (See: **Predictive Past (p.754)**)

### these things

Here Paul refers to what he has already written, especially to [9:6–14](#). Use a form in your language that refers back to things that have just been said. Alternate translation: “those things” or “what I have just written” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### thus it might be done

Here, **thus** refers to receiving financial support from the Corinthians. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **thus** with a word or phrase that more clearly refers to receiving financial support. Alternate translation: “these things might be done” or “support might be given” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### it might be done for me

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what is **done** rather than the person doing it. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “you,” the Corinthians, would do it. Alternate translation: “you might do for me” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## will make my boast empty

Here Paul speaks as if a **boast** was a container that someone could make **empty**. By speaking in this way, Paul means that someone could take away what he boasts about. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **make my boast empty** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “will remove my reason for boasting” or “will deflate my boast” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## my boast

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **boast**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “boast.” Alternate translation: “what I boast about” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:16

### if I proclaim the gospel, there is nothing for me to boast, because compulsion is placed upon me

If your language would normally put the reason before the result, you could rearrange the order of these clauses. Alternate translation: “because compulsion is placed on me, there is nothing for me to boast about if I proclaim the gospel” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

#### if

Paul is speaking as if “proclaiming” **the gospel** was only a possibility, but he means that he actually does this. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, and if your readers might think that what Paul is saying is not certain, then you could translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: “when” or “whenever” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.648)**)

### compulsion is placed

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on himself, upon whom the **compulsion is placed**, rather than focusing on the person placing the **compulsion**. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God places compulsion” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### compulsion is placed upon me

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **compulsion**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “compel” and rephrase the clause. Alternate translation: “I am compelled to do so” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### compulsion is placed upon me

Here Paul speaks as if **compulsion** were a physical object that someone had **placed upon** him. By speaking in this way, he means that he is required to do something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “I am commanded to do so” or “I have an obligation” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### woe be to me

Here, **woe be to me** expresses what Paul thinks would happen to him if he ever were to stop preaching the gospel. He would experience **woe**, with the implication that this **woe** will come from God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **woe be to me** with a word or phrase that expresses the expectation of bad things to come. Alternate translation: “bad things will happen to me” or “God will punish me” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### if I would not preach the gospel

Paul is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he is already convinced that the condition is not true. He knows that he does indeed **preach the gospel**. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: “whenever I stop preaching the gospel, which I will never do” (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:17

### if I do this willingly, I have a reward. But if unwillingly, I have been entrusted with a stewardship

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce two possibilities. He means that he might **do this willingly**, or he might do it **unwillingly**. He specifies a result for each option, but he implies that he does it **unwillingly** (See: the “compulsion” in 9:16). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statements in a natural way in your language, such as by introducing them with “whenever.” Alternate translation: “were I to do this willingly, I would have a reward. But were it unwillingly, I would still have been entrusted with a stewardship” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### I do this

Here, **this** refers back to “preaching the gospel” in 9:16. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **this** by clarifying what it refers to. Alternate translation: “I preach the gospel” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### willingly, & unwillingly

Here, **willingly** means that someone does something because they choose to, while **unwillingly** means that someone has to do something whether they choose to or not. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **willingly** and **unwillingly** by using two contrasting words that refer to whether someone chooses to do something or not. Alternate translation: “because I choose to ... I do not choose to do it” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### I have a reward

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **reward**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “reward” or “compensate.” Alternate translation: “I am compensated for it” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p. 618)**)

### But if unwillingly, I have been entrusted with a stewardship

This sentence could: (1) include both the “if” and the “then” statements and explain how Paul preaching the gospel is “unwilling.” He did not choose this **stewardship**, and so he does it **unwillingly**. However, the reason he does preach the gospel is because he has **been entrusted with** that **stewardship**. Alternate translation: “But if unwillingly, I do this because I have been entrusted with a stewardship” (2) express the “if” statement for the question (the “then” statement) at the beginning of the next verse (9:18). The word **unwillingly** would modify **entrusted**, and you would need to connect the end of this verse and the beginning of the next verse with a comma, dropping the capitalization on “What.” Alternate translation: “But I have been unwillingly entrusted with a stewardship,” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### But if unwillingly

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them explicitly in the previous clause (**I do this**). If your language does need these words, you could supply them from that clause. Alternate translation: “But if I do this unwillingly” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)



## I have been entrusted with

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on himself, who has **been entrusted**, rather than focusing on the person doing the “entrusting.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God has entrusted me with” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## a stewardship

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **stewardship**, you can express the idea by using a phrase with a verb such as “oversee” or “do.” Alternate translation: “something to do” or “a task to oversee” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

# 1 Corinthians 9:18

## What then is my reward

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the following words are the answer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question by using a construction that introduces what follows as the **reward**. Alternate translation: "This, then, is my reward:" or "Here, then, is my reward:" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## my reward

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **reward**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "reward" or "compensate." Alternate translation: "the way God rewards me" or "the way God compensates me" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## proclaiming the gospel without charge, I might offer

Here, **proclaiming the gospel without charge** describes how Paul wishes to **offer** the gospel. The phrase **proclaiming the gospel without charge** could: (1) provide the means by which Paul **might offer**. Alternate translation: "by proclaiming the gospel without charge, I might offer" (2) give the situations in which Paul "offers" the gospel without taking **advantage of his right**. Alternate translation: "whenever I proclaim the gospel without charge, I offer" (See: **Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship (p.660)**)

## without charge

Here, **without charge** means that something is free to the person who receives it. Paul is stating that the **gospel** is "free" or "at no cost" for those to whom he preaches. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **without cost** with a word or phrase that indicates that something is "free" or "without cost." Alternate translation: "freely" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## I might offer the gospel

Here, to **offer the gospel** means to tell people about the gospel so that they have the chance to believe in it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **offer the gospel** with a comparable phrase. Alternate translation: "I might present the gospel" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## to take advantage of my right

Here, **to take advantage** of something means to use that thing for one's own benefit. Here Paul could use the word: (1) negatively, which would mean that Paul does not want to abuse his **right**. Alternate translation: "to abuse my right" or "to exploit my right" (2) positively, which would mean that Paul does not want to make use of the **right**, even though it would be fine to do so. Alternate translation: ""to make use of my right" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## of my right

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **right**, you can express the idea by using a verbal phrase such as "are able to" or "can require." Alternate translation: "of what I can require" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## in the gospel

Here Paul speaks as if his **right** was inside **the gospel**. He speaks in this way in order to show that he only has the **right** because of his work for **the gospel**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “by the gospel” or “that comes from the gospel” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:19

### For being free

Here, **For** introduces verses 19–23. Paul is drawing an inference from what he said in 9:18 about offering the gospel “without charge.” Since he offers the gospel without charge, he is **free from all**. In this and the following verses, Paul will explain what he does as someone who is **free from all** and how this is beneficial or a “reward.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **For** with a word or phrase that introduces an explanation or further development. Alternate translation: “So, because I am free” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### being

Here, **being** introduces a phrase that: (1) contrasts with **I enslaved myself**. Alternate translation: “although I am” (2) gives the reason why Paul can “enslave himself.” Alternate translation: “because I am” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### being free from all, I enslaved myself to all

Here Paul uses the language of slavery and freedom to describe how he proclaims the gospel. Since he does not charge money when he proclaims the gospel, he is **free**. No person employs him or tells him what to do. However, Paul decides to serve others, to “enslave himself,” by doing what others think is right. In this way, he acts like a slave who has to do what his master requires. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the slavery and freedom metaphor with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “not having to obey all, I choose to obey all” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### all, & to all

Here, the Corinthians would have understood **all** to refer specifically to people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **all** by including a word or phrase that clarifies that Paul is speaking about “people.” Alternate translation: “all people ... to all people” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### I might gain

Here, to **gain** someone means to help them toward belief in the Messiah. Once people believe, they belong to Christ and his church, and so the person who preached the gospel to them “gained” them as a new part of the church. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **gain** plainly or with a comparable phrase. Alternate translation: “I might convert” or “I might gain for Christ” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### the more {people}

Here Paul is speaking about how “enslaving himself” **to all** gains **more** than if he did not “enslave himself” in this way. He refers specifically to people here, just like **all** refers to people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **even more things** by clarifying that Paul is referring to gaining **more** people than if he did not “enslave himself.” Alternate translation: “even more people” or “more people in this way” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:20

### I became as a Jew

Alternate translation: "I practiced Jewish customs"

### to gain & to gain

Just as in 9:19, to **gain** someone means to help them to believe in the Messiah. Translate this word the same way you did in 9:19. Alternate translation: "to convert" or "to gain for Christ" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### under law, & under law, & under law & under law

Here Paul speaks about those who think that they need to obey the law as if they were physically **under law**. By speaking as if the **law** were on top of these people, Paul emphasizes how the **law** controls their lives. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **under law** with a word or phrase that refers to the obligation to obey the **law**. Alternate translation: "who keep the law ... one who keeps the law ... one who keeps the law ... who keep the law" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### under law, as under law

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them explicitly in the previous clause (**I became**). If your language does need these words, you could supply them from that clause. Alternate translation: "under law, I became as one under law" (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### as under law

Alternate translation: "I kept the law"

### not being under law myself

A few early manuscripts do not include **not being under law myself**. However, most early manuscripts do include these words. If possible, include these words in your translation. (See: **Textual Variants (p.775)**)

### not being

Here, **not being** introduces a phrase that contrasts with **as under law**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **not being** by adding words that introduce a contrast. Alternate translation: "although I am not" (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### law, not being under law myself in order to gain the ones under law

Here, **in order to gain the ones under law** is the purpose for which Paul acts like a person **under law**. The phrase **not being under law myself** indicates that Paul realizes that he is not actually **under law**. If your language would put the purpose immediate after what leads to that purpose, you could rearrange these two clauses. Alternate translation: "law in order to win those under law, not being under law myself" (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:21

### To the ones without law, {& without law (& the ones without law

Here, **without the law** refers to people who do not have **the law** that Moses wrote down. These people are not Jews, but Paul is not saying that they are disobedient. Rather, Paul is emphasizing **the law** that Moses wrote down here, which is why he uses this language rather than referring to “Gentiles” or “non-Jews.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **without the law** by clarifying that Paul is referring to people who do not have the law of Moses. Alternate translation: “To those without Moses’ law ... without Moses’ law ... those without Moses’ law” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### I became} as without law

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them explicitly in the previous verses (**I became** in 9:20). If your language does need these words, you could supply them from that clause. Since English needs these words, the ULT has supplied them in brackets. (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### not being without the law of God, but under the law of Christ) so that I might gain the ones without law

Much like in 9:20, Paul includes some statements between being **without the law** and the purpose of being **without the law**. If your readers would find this structure confusing, you could rearrange the clauses so that the purpose comes immediately after **without the law**, or you could mark the statements in the middle as parenthetical, as the ULT does. Alternate translation: “so that I might win those without the law. Now I am not without the law of God, but under the law of Christ” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### without the law of God

Here Paul uses the possessive form to state that: (1) he is **not without the law** that **God** has given. Paul distinguishes between the **law** that Moses wrote down and God’s **law** in general. Alternate translation: “without any law from God” (2) he is **not** someone who is disobedient (**without the law**) towards **God**. Paul is distinguishing between people who do not have the **law** that Moses wrote down and people who disobey God. Alternate translation: “disobedient towards God” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### under the law of Christ

Much like in 9:20, Paul speaks about those who think that they need to obey **the law** as if they were physically **under the law**. By speaking as if **the law** were on top of these people, Paul emphasizes how **the law** controls their lives. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **under the law** with a word or phrase that refers to the obligation to obey **the law of Christ**. Alternate translation: “keeping the law of Christ” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### under the law of Christ

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **the law** that **Christ** commanded. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form with a word or phrase that clearly states that **Christ** commanded this **law**. Alternate translation: “under Christ’s law” or “under the law that comes from Christ” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## I might gain

Just as in [9:19](#), to **gain** someone means to help them to believe in the Messiah. Translate this word the same way you did in [9:19](#). Alternate translation: "I might convert" or "I might gain for Christ" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p. 780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:22

### To the weak & weak & the weak

Much like in 8:7-12, **weak** identifies a person who easily feels guilty. A **weak** person thinks some things are wrong that are probably acceptable before God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **weak** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "To the sensitive ... sensitive ... the sensitive" or "To those who often condemn themselves ... one who condemns himself ... those who often condemn themselves" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### To the weak & the weak

Paul is using the adjective **weak** 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: "To people who are weak ... the people who are weak" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### I might gain

Just as in 9:19, to **gain** someone means to help that person believe in the Messiah. Translate this word the same way you did in 9:19. Alternate translation: "I might convert" or "I might gain for Christ" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### I have become all things to everyone

Here, to **become all things** means that Paul has lived in many different ways. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **I have become all things** more naturally in your language. Alternate translation: "I have lived in all ways with everyone" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### I have become all things to everyone

Here, **all things** and **everyone** are exaggerations that the Corinthians would have understood to mean that Paul has become many things to many people. Paul speaks in this way to emphasize that he is willing to **become** anything to anyone as long it leads to saving people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could qualify Paul's claim and expression the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "I have become many things to many people" (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

### so that I might by all means save

Alternate translation: "so that, by using every means I have, I might save"

### I might by all means save

Here Paul speaks of how he leads others to faith in Jesus as "saving" them. By this, he means that he himself is the means by which God will save **some**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express how Paul says that he can **save some** with a word or phrase that refers to leading someone towards "salvation," that is, helping them to believe in Jesus. Alternate translation: "God might by all means use me to save" (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)



## 1 Corinthians 9:23

### But

Here, **But** introduces a summary of what Paul has said in 9:19–22. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **But** with a word or phrase that introduces a summary or concluding statement. Alternate translation: “In the end,” or “So,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### I do all things

Alternate translation: “everything I do is”

### a partaker of it

Here, **a partaker** is someone who participates in or shares in something with others. What Paul means is that he acts in the ways that he does with the purpose of participating in or sharing in the **gospel** and receiving what the **gospel** promises. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **partaker** with a comparable word or phrase that indicates that Paul is a “participator” or “sharer” in the **gospel**. Alternate translation: “a sharer in it” or “a participator in it” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### I might become a partaker of it

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **partaker**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “partake” or “share.” Alternate translation: “I might partake in it” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### of it

Here, **it** refers back to **the gospel**, but Paul particularly has in mind the benefits or blessings that come from **the gospel**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **it** by clarifying that Paul is referring to the blessings of **the gospel**. Alternate translation: “of its blessings” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:24

### Do you not know that the ones running in a stadium all run, but {only} one receives the prize

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “yes, we know.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong statement. Alternate translation: “You certainly know that in a race all those who are running run, but only one receives the prize.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### the ones running in a stadium all run, but {only} one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you might obtain {it

Here Paul begins using athletic metaphors, metaphors he will use throughout 9:24–27. In this verse, he focuses on footraces. In his culture, only the runner who finished first would receive **the prize**. The **prize** might be one of many things, but often it was a “wreath” of leaves (See: 9:25). Paul’s point is that the runner who wished to win had to work and train hard to be the best. Paul wants the Corinthians to approach their Christian lives with this mindset, the mindset of a successful athlete. Translate this verse in a way that clearly connects the Christian life to a footrace. Alternate translation: “only one runner receives the prize after a race? You should live your lives like a runner who focuses on receiving the prize” (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

### the ones running in a stadium all run

Alternate translation: “in a race everyone runs”

### prize

Here, **prize** refers to what a runner would receive after winning the race. In Paul’s culture, this would often be a “wreath” of leaves (9:25) and sometimes money. Use a word in your culture that refers generally to what an athlete receives after winning a contest. Alternate translation: “trophy” or “reward” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:25

### everyone competing in the games

Here, **everyone competing in the games** refers generally to any athlete who participates in a competition, not just runners, as in the last verse. Use a word or phrase in your language that refers to athletes who compete in any sport or competition. Alternate translation: “every competitor in athletic competitions” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### exercises self-control

Here Paul specifically has in mind the way an athlete only eats certain foods, trains their body in difficult ways, and behaves differently than most other people. All of this requires **self-control**. He implies at the end of the verse that **we** too must exercise **self-control**. If possible, use a word or phrase that refers to athletic training but that can be applied to the Christian life as well. Alternate translation: “disciplines themselves” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### They therefore {do it} in order that

Here Paul omits some words that may be required in your language to make a full sentence. If your language needs these words, you could supply them from the first sentence in the verse. Since English needs these words, the ULT has supplied them in brackets. Alternate translation: “They therefore exercise self-control in order that” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### a perishable wreath

Here, the **wreath** refers to a crown made out of leaves gathered from a plant or a tree. This **wreath** was given to the athlete who won the contest as a symbol of their victory. Since the **wreath** was made out of leaves, it was **perishable**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **perishable wreath** by using a word or phrase that refers to what a winning athlete receives while still emphasizing that this prize is **perishable**. Alternate translation: “a breakable medal” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### we, an imperishable one

Here Paul omits some words that may be required in your language to make a full sentence. If your language needs these words, you could supply them from earlier in the verse. Alternate translation: “we do it in order that we might receive an imperishable one” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### an imperishable one

Here Paul speaks of a **wreath** that is **imperishable** that believers will **receive**. He speaks of what God will give to believers as a **wreath** in order to emphasize that Christians will receive something like the honor and glory that a successful athlete receives. Paul emphasizes that it will be better because it will be **imperishable**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this figure of speech plainly or with an analogy. Alternate translation: “an imperishable reward that is like a wreath” or “an imperishable prize” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:26

### I run thus, not as without purpose; I fight thus, not as boxing the air

Here Paul uses two different athletic metaphors, the first from footraces and the second from boxing. Both metaphors emphasize how Paul remains focused on his goal. As a runner, he has a **purpose**, which is to reach the finish line as quickly as possible. As a boxer, he does not box **the air** but rather focuses on striking his opponent. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these figures of speech by stating the ideas plainly or by using analogies. Alternate translation: "I focus on the goal, much like a runner focuses on the finish line and a boxer focuses on striking the opponent" (See: **Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors (p.630)**)

### thus, not as without purpose; & thus, not as boxing the air

In both halves of this verse, Paul introduces how he "runs" or "fights" with the word **thus**, and then he explains more clearly how he "runs" or "fights." If your readers would find this confusing, you could introduce how Paul "runs" or "fights" more naturally. Alternate translation: "not as without purpose ... not as boxing the air" or "as one who is not without purpose ... as one who is not boxing the air" (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### not as without purpose

Here Paul uses a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that means the opposite of the intended meaning. If this is confusing in your language, you can express the meaning positively. Alternate translation: "as with purpose" (See: **Litotes (p.724)**)

### not as boxing the air

Here Paul refers to a boxer who hits **the air** instead of the opponent. This kind of boxer does not succeed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **boxing the air** with a phrase that refers to a boxer who often misses his punches. Alternate translation: "not as missing my punches" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 9:27

### I subdue my body

Here Paul uses words that continue the boxing metaphor from 9:26. The clause **I subdue my body** could also be translated "I give my body a black eye." Paul's point is that he controls or rules over his **body**, just like boxers control or rule over any opponents that they have punched in the face. He does not mean that he physically hurts his body. Since this language would be misunderstood in English, the ULT has expressed the idea plainly. You could also express the idea plainly, or you could use a comparable metaphor. Alternate translation: "I rule my body" or "I take control of my body" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### my body and enslave it

Here Paul uses **my body** to refer to himself as a whole. He does not mean that his nonphysical part "subdues" and "enslaves" his physical part. Rather, he means that he "subdues" and "enslaves" himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **my body** by using a natural way in your language to refer to oneself. Alternate translation: "myself and enslave myself" (See: **Synecdoche (p.773)**)

### enslave it

Here Paul speaks as if he were "enslaving" his **body**. He speaks in this way to again emphasize that he controls and rules over himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **enslave it** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "control it" or "govern it" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### Iest having preached to others

Here, **having preached to others** could identify: (1) a contrast with how he **might be disqualified**. Alternate translation: "Iest, although I have preached to others" (2) what Paul has done before he **might be disqualified**. Alternate translation: "Iest, after having preached to others" (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### I myself might be disqualified

Here, **disqualified** continues the athletic imagery. An athlete who is **disqualified** is unable to win the competition and receive the prize. Paul speaks in this way to emphasize that he wants to be able to receive a reward from God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "I myself might not reach the goal" or "I myself might fail to please God" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### I myself might be disqualified

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on himself, who could be **disqualified**, rather than focusing on the person doing the "disqualifying." If you must state who would do the action, Paul implies that "God" would do it. Alternate translation: "God might disqualify even me" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## **I myself might be**

Here, **myself** focuses attention on **I**. If **myself** would not draw attention to the Son in your language, you could express the attention or focus in another way. Alternate translation: “even I might be” or “I indeed might be” (See: **Reflexive Pronouns (p.763)**)

# 1 Corinthians 10

## 1 Corinthians 10 General Notes

### Structure and Formatting

On food (8:1–11:1)

- Warning from Israelite history (10:1–12)
- Encouragement and command (10:13–14)
- The Lord's Supper and food offered to idols (10:15–22)
- Both freedom and care for others (10:23–11:1)

## Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

### The Exodus and wilderness journey

In the first half of this chapter, Paul consistently refers to the narrative about how God rescued the Israelites from Egypt and led them through the wilderness so that they could take possession of the land he had promised to give them. He mentions multiple stories from this narrative. God led the Israelites by appearing as a pillar of cloud, and he made a path through the sea for them (See: [Exodus 13:17–14:31](#)). God miraculously provided them with food while they were traveling through the desert (See: [Exodus 16](#)), and he also provided water from a rock for them to drink (See: [Exodus 17:1–7](#) and [Numbers 20:2–13](#)). Despite this, the Israelites often grumbled against God and against their leaders, so God punished them by letting them die in the wilderness (See: [Numbers 14:20–35](#)). The Israelites also worshiped other gods (See: [Exodus 32:1–6](#)) and committed sexual immorality (See: [Numbers 25:1–9](#)), so God again punished them. Other times when the Israelites complained about their leaders, God sent snakes (See: [Numbers 21:5–6](#)) or a plague ([Numbers 16:41–50](#)) to kill them. Paul's point here is that God acted to save the Israelites, but when they disobeyed or grumbled, God punished them. Paul wants the Corinthians to understand this as a warning to them as well. They should not be like the Israelites. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/promisedland\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/other/desert\]\]](#))

### “Spiritual”

In [10:3–4](#), Paul states that the Israelites ate “spiritual food” and drank “spiritual drink” from a “spiritual rock.” By “spiritual,” Paul could be referring to the action of God's Spirit, who provided the food and drink from the rock. By using “spiritual,” Paul could also be identifying the “food,” “drink,” and “rock” as prefigurations or types of the Lord's Supper, which he discusses later in the chapter. Or, he could simply want the reader to think of the Lord's Supper without drawing any direct connection. Consider the theology of the group you are translating for to decide exactly how to express “spiritual” here. (See: **spirit, wind, breath (p.811)**)

### The Lord's Supper

In [10:16–17, 21](#), Paul refers to the Lord's Supper. He describes the unity that comes with the Lord and with other believers when believers partake of the “cup” and the “table,” that is, the bread and the wine. He then argues that this unity means that participating in the Lord's Supper is incompatible with participating in meals that unite one to idols, or rather, to the demons that the idols represent. In these verses, use words and phrases that fit with how your language talks about the Lord's Supper.

## Things sacrificed to idols

In Paul's culture, animals were often sacrificed to the gods. After the animal was slaughtered, the people who were participating in the worship would eat parts of the animal. Other times, some of the meat would be sold in the market, as Paul implies in [10:25](#). For most people who were not wealthy, participating in worship with a sacrifice or buying sacrificed meat in the market were two of the few situations in which they could eat meat. Throughout this chapter, Paul continues to explain how the Corinthians should think about eating or not eating this meat. (See: **god, false god, goddess, idol, idolater, idolatrous, idolatry (p.795)**)

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Rhetorical questions

In [10:16, 18–19, 22, 29–30](#), Paul uses rhetorical questions. He is not asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to provide him with information. Rather, he is asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to think about how they are acting and what they are thinking. The questions encourage them to think along with Paul. For ways to translate these questions, look for the notes on each verse that includes these kinds of questions. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### “That rock was Christ”

In [10:4](#), Paul states that the “rock” from which the Israelites received water “was Christ.” This metaphor can be interpreted in two major ways: (1) Paul could be saying that Christ was the one who made the rock provide the Israelites with water. (2) Paul could be saying that the rock provided water for the Israelites like Christ provides salvation for those who believe in him. (3) Paul could be saying that Christ was somehow present in or with the rock itself. Since Paul's sentence allows for a number of interpretations, if possible you should also allow for a number of interpretations with your translation. Also, consider the theology of the group you are translating for to decide exactly how to express “that rock was Christ.”

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Quoting the Corinthians

In [10:23](#), Paul quotes words that the Corinthians have said or that they wrote to him. The ULT indicates these words by putting quotation marks around them. Use a natural way in your language to indicate that an author is quoting someone else. (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

### Are [10:28–29a](#) a parenthesis?

In [10:25–27](#), Paul tells the Corinthians that they can eat any food from the marketplace or in someone's home without asking about whether it was sacrificed to an idol. Everything belongs to God, so whether it was sacrificed or not does not matter. However, in [10:28–29a](#), Paul gives an exception: if someone tells you directly that the food was sacrificed to an idol, you should not eat it for the sake of the person who told you. Immediately after, however, in [10:29b](#), he asks a question that implies that one's freedom should be constrained by some other person's ideas about right and wrong. This does not seem to fit with the exception Paul has given in [10:28–29a](#). Most likely, Paul means [10:28–29a](#) to be understood as a side note, and [10:29b](#) follows directly from [10:27](#). In order to indicate this, the UST puts parentheses around [10:28–29a](#). Consider using a natural way in your language to indicate a side note or a digression from the main argument.



## 1 Corinthians 10:1

### For

Here, **For** introduces what Paul says about the Israelites in 10:1–5. What Paul says in these verses explains what he said in the previous verse about how he and other believers should work hard not to be “disqualified” (9:27). The Israelites whom God took out of Egypt were “disqualified,” and believers should work not to be like them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **For** with a word or phrase that introduces an example or support. Alternate translation: “Here is an example:” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### I do not want you to be ignorant

Here Paul uses a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that means the opposite of the intended meaning. If this is confusing in your language, you can express the meaning positively. Alternate translation: “I want you to know” (See: **Litotes (p.724)**)

### brothers, & fathers

Although the words **brothers** and **fathers** are masculine, Paul is using them to refer to both men and women. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** and **fathers** with non gendered words or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “brothers and sisters ... fathers and mothers” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### our fathers

Here, **our fathers** refers to the Israelites who were slaves in Egypt and whom God rescued. Not all the Corinthians were descended from these Israelites. However, Paul can still refer to the Israelites as their **fathers** because he believes that all Christians have been included in the family of Abraham, the ancestor of the Israelites. Preserve the family language in your translation. Alternate translation: “our forefathers” (See: **Kinship (p.722)**)

### were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea

In this verse, Paul refers to the story of when God brought the Israelites out of Egypt. For this story, see especially [Exodus 13:17–14:31](#). God appeared to the Israelites as a pillar of cloud and fire, and he led them and protected them with this pillar of cloud and fire. To get out of Egypt, God led them to a sea called the “Red Sea” or the “Sea of Reeds.” When the king of Egypt came to take the Israelites back to Egypt, God worked through Moses to divide the water of the sea and make a path for the Israelites to travel through. When the king of Egypt tried to follow them, God sent the water back, and the Egyptian army drowned. Paul draws special attention to the **cloud** and the **sea** because of what he will say in the next verse. If your readers are not familiar with this story, you could add a footnote that refers to or summarizes the story. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### passed through

Here Paul is speaking about how God parted a sea and the Israelites **passed through** that sea without getting wet. Use a word or phrase that refers to going through an area to get to the other side. Alternate translation: “went through” (See: **Go and Come (p.694)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:2

### they all were baptized into Moses

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **baptized** rather than focusing on the person doing the “baptizing.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” or an unknown person does it. Alternate translation: “they all experienced baptism into Moses” or “God baptized them all into Moses” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### they all were baptized into Moses

Here, **baptized into** identifies the person with whom one is united in baptism. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **baptized into** by clarifying the idea by using language of union or relationship. Alternate translation: “they all were baptized so that they followed Moses” or “they all were baptized into relationship with Moses” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### they all were baptized into Moses

Here Paul speaks as if the Israelites had been **baptized**, just like believers in Jesus are **baptized**. By this, he does not mean that the Israelites had a different savior, Moses. Rather, he wants to connect the Israelites and the Corinthians, and one way to do that is to connect their leaders (**Moses** and Jesus). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **baptized into Moses** by using an analogy or indicating that Paul is speaking. Since Paul's point is to connect the ideas in this verse to “baptism into Jesus,” preserve the metaphor here. Alternate translation: “they all were baptized, so to speak, into Moses” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### in the cloud and in the sea

For the significance of the **cloud** and the **sea**, see the notes on the previous verse. God led the Israelites with the cloud, and he led them through the sea. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:3

### they all ate the same spiritual food

In this verse, Paul refers to how God provided the Israelites with **spiritual food** while they were traveling through the desert. This food was called “manna.” For the story, see [Exodus 16](#). While Paul does not explicitly state this, it is clear that he is comparing the “manna” to the bread in the Lord’s Supper, just as he compared passing through the Red Sea with baptism in the last two verses. If your readers are not familiar with this story, you could add a footnote that refers to or summarizes the story. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### spiritual

Here, **spiritual** could indicate: (1) that Paul is indicating that the **food** should be compared with the bread in the Lord’s Supper, which is also “spiritual.” Alternate translation: “divine” (2) that the **food** came from God in a supernatural way. Alternate translation: “supernatural” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:4

### they all drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank from a spiritual rock following {them}

Here Paul refers to two stories that tell how the Israelites drank water that came out of a rock. For these stories, see [Exodus 17:1–7](#) and [Numbers 20:2–13](#). In both of these stories, the Israelites are thirsty in the desert, and God commands Moses to act (either by speaking or by striking the rock with a staff) so that water comes out of the rock for the Israelites to drink. If your readers are not familiar with these stories, you could add a footnote that refers to or summarizes the stories. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### spiritual

Here, **spiritual** could indicate: (1) that Paul is indicating that the **drink** should be compared with the wine in the Lord's Supper, which is also **spiritual**. Alternate translation: "divine" (2) that the **drink** came from God in a supernatural way. Alternate translation: "supernatural" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### a spiritual

Here, **spiritual** could indicate: (1) that Paul is already hinting that the **rock** should be interpreted as more than a rock, as **Christ** (as he does at the end of the verse). Alternate translation: "a divine" (2) that God used the **rock** in a supernatural way. Alternate translation: "a supernatural" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### rock following {them}

Some early Jewish scholars used the two stories about the water coming from the rock to argue that it was the same rock in both stories. This means that the rock was **following** the Israelites as they journeyed through the desert. Paul seems to refer to this interpretation here. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **following {them}** by including a footnote explaining why Paul speaks in this way. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### the rock was Christ

Here Paul identifies the **rock** as **Christ**. By speaking in this way, he means that the rock was the source of water and life for the Israelites, just as **Christ** is the source of life for all those who believe in him. Paul also probably means that **Christ** was the one who made the water come from the **rock**. If possible, preserve Paul's metaphor here. If you must express the idea in another, you could state a comparison between how the **rock** provided for the Israelites and how **Christ** provides for all his people, including the Israelites. Alternate translation: "they received water from that rock like we receive life from Christ" or "Christ provided for them through the rock, and he provides for us now" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:5

### was not well pleased

Alternate translation: “was displeased”

### God was not well pleased with most of them

If it would be more natural in your language, you could rearrange this clause so that **them** is the subject and **God** is the object. Alternate translation: “most of them were not pleasing to God” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### they were scattered about

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **scattered about** rather than focusing on the person doing the “scattering.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God scattered them about” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### they were scattered about in

Paul is referring to the deaths of many Israelites as “scattering about.” This is a polite way of referring to something unpleasant while still expressing the idea that they died in many different places. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **they were scattered about** with a different polite way of referring to deaths or you could state it plainly. Alternate translation: “they passed away throughout” (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

### they were scattered about in the wilderness

Here Paul speaks in general of how the Israelites left Egypt to go to the land that God had promised to give them. To get to that land, they traveled through **the wilderness**. However, the Israelites often disobeyed or grumbled against God, and so he **was not well pleased with most of them**. He punished them by letting most of them die **in the wilderness** and only allowing their children to enter the land that he had promised. See [Numbers 14:20-35](#) for God’s announcement of judgment. If your readers are not familiar with this story, you could add a footnote that refers to or summarizes the story. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:6

### these things

Here, **these things** refers to what Paul has said about the Israelites in [10:1-5](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **these things** to more clearly express what it refers to. Alternate translation: “what happened to them” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### became examples

Here Paul states that things that happened to the Israelites **became examples**. This means that what happened can be interpreted as **examples** or occurred as **examples**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **became** to more clearly state that **these things** should be understood as **examples**. Alternate translation: “can be understood as” or “happened as examples” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### we would not be ones desiring

Alternate translation: “we would not desire”

### desired

Here Paul omits some words that may be required in your language to make a full sentence. If your language needs these words, you could supply them from earlier in the verse. Alternate translation: “desired evil things” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:7

### even as it is written

In Paul's culture, **even as it is written** was a normal way to introduce a quotation from an important text. In this case, the quotation comes from [Exodus 32:6](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express how Paul introduces the quotation with a comparable phrase that indicates that Paul is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: "for it can be read in Exodus" or "For in the book of Exodus we read" (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

### it is written

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what **is written** rather than focusing on the person doing the "writing." If you must state who does the action, you can express it so that: (1) the scripture or scripture author writes or speaks the words. Alternate translation: "Moses has written" (2) God speaks the words. Alternate translation: "God has said" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### it is written, "The people sat down to eat and to drink and rose up to play

If your language does not use this form, you can translate the command as an indirect quote instead of as a direct quote. Alternate translation: "it is written that the people sat down to eat and to drink and rose up to play" (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

### The people sat down to eat and to drink and rose up to play

This quotation comes from a story in which Moses has gone up on a mountain to meet with God. While he is gone, the Israelites make an idol and worship it. This quotation is how their worship is described. Paul chooses this verse because it refers specifically to food sacrificed to idols and to sexual immorality (**play**, see the next note), which are the topics he has discussed and will again discuss. If your readers are not familiar with this story, you could add a footnote that refers to or summarizes the story. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### to play

Here, **play** is a polite way to refer to sexual behavior. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **play** with a comparable polite term. Alternate translation: "to have sex" or "to make love" (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:8

### should we commit sexual immorality, & committed sexual immorality

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **immorality**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as “immoral.” Alternate translation: “should we commit what is sexually immoral ... committed what is sexually immoral” or “should behave in sexually immoral ways ... behaved in sexually immoral ways” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### many of them committed sexual immorality, and 23,000 people fell in one day

Here Paul refers to a story found in [Numbers 25:1–9](#). In this story, many Israelites began to worship a god named “Baal of Peor.” While worshiping this god, they also **committed sexual immorality**. God judged the Israelites by killing 23,000 of them. If your readers are not familiar with this story, you could add a footnote that refers to or summarizes the story. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### and

Here, **and** introduces the result of the Israelites committing **sexual immorality**. If your language does not use **and** to introduce a result, you can use a word or phrase that is more natural. Alternate translation: “and as a result,” or “with the result that” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### 23,000 people

Here, **23,000** does not match the number that the Old Testament story includes, which is 24,000. Most likely, Paul is using a round number here. Consider using ways in your language to express a number, particularly a round number. Alternate translation: “about twenty-three thousand people” (See: **Numbers (p.740)**)

### fell

Paul is referring to the deaths of many Israelites as “falling.” This is a polite way of referring to something unpleasant. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **fell** with a different polite way of referring to deaths or you could state the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “they passed away” or “fell down dead” (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

### in one day

Here, **one day** refers to one period of time in which the sun is visible in the sky. Use a word or phrase in your language that refers to this time period. Alternate translation: “in a single day” or “during one daytime” (See: **Numbers (p.740)**)



## 1 Corinthians 10:9

### the Lord

Many early manuscripts have **the Lord** here, but many other early manuscripts have “Christ.” Consider whether translations with which your readers might be familiar use “Christ” or **the Lord**. If there is no strong reason to choose one option over the other, you could follow the ULT. (See: **Textual Variants (p.775)**)

### many of them put {him} to the test and were destroyed by the snakes

Here Paul refers to a story found in [Numbers 21:5–6](#). In this story, many Israelites “spoke against” or challenged their leaders and God himself. In response, God sent **snakes** that bit the Israelites, and many of the people died. If your readers are not familiar with this story, you could add a footnote that refers to or summarizes the story. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### and

Here, **and** introduces the result of the Israelites “putting” **the Lord to the test**. If your language does not use **and** to introduce a result, you can use a word or phrase that is more natural. Alternate translation: “and as a result” or “with the result that they” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### were destroyed by the snakes

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **destroyed** rather than focusing on who or what does the “destroying.” If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that “God” did it by using **the snakes**. Alternate translation: “God used snakes to destroy them” (See: **Active or Passive (p. 621)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:10

### many of them grumbled and were destroyed by the destroyer

Here Paul refers to a story found in [Numbers 16:41–50](#) and perhaps also a story found in [Numbers 14:1–38](#). In both of these stories, Israelites **grumbled** or complained about how their leaders and God himself are leading them. In response, God sends a plague or kills Israelites who **grumbled**. If your readers are not familiar with these stories, you could add a footnote that refers to or summarizes the stories. Num 16:41–50 (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### and

Here, **and** introduces the result of the Israelites “grumbling.” If your language does not use **and** to introduce a result, you can use a word or phrase that is more natural. Alternate translation: “and as a result” or “with the result that they” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### were destroyed by the destroyer

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **destroyed** rather than focusing on who or what does the “destroying.” If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that “God” did it by using **the destroyer**. Alternate translation: “God used the destroyer to destroy them” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### the destroyer

Here, **the destroyer** refers to an angelic messenger whom God sends to “destroy.” Sometimes, this angel is called “the Angel of Death.” The stories that Paul refers to do not explicitly mention **the destroyer**, but Paul understands **the destroyer** to be the one who acts out God’s judgment by bringing a plague and killing Israelites. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the destroyer** with a word or phrase that refers to a spiritual being that “destroys.” However, this spiritual being must be one whom God could send. Alternate translation: “the angel of death” or “a destroying angel” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:11

### these things

Here, **these things** refers back to what Paul has said about the Israelites in [10:7–10](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **these things** to clarify what the phrase refers to. Alternate translation: “the events that I have mentioned” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### as} examples

Just as in [10:6](#), **examples** here refers to how the stories about the Israelites function as **examples** or “illustrations” for the believers who hear or read those stories. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **examples** with a comparable word or phrase and compare with how you translated “examples” in [10:6](#). Alternate translation: “as patterns” or “as models” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### but

Here, **but** introduces a further development. It does not contrast with the previous clause. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **but** with a word or phrase that introduces a further development. Alternate translation: “and” or “and then” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### they were written

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what is **written** rather than focusing on the person doing the “writing.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “Moses” or “someone” did it. Alternate translation: “a person wrote them” or “Moses wrote them” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### for our admonition

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **admonition**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “admonish.” Alternate translation: “to admonish us” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### on whom the end of the ages has come

Here Paul speaks as if **the end of the ages** could **come** on somebody. By speaking as if **the end of the ages** were something that could **come**, Paul expresses the idea that he and the Corinthians are living during **the end of the ages**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “who live during the end of the ages” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### on whom the end of the ages has come

Here, **the end of the ages** refers to the last period in the history of the world. It also means that this last period has been the goal of all the previous events. If your language has a way to refer to the last period in the history of the world, you could use it here. If your language has a way to refer to the end of the world, you could express the idea by stating that the end of the world will happen soon. Alternate translation: “to whom the end of the world is coming soon” or “on whom the end times have come” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:12

### he stands, & he might not fall

Here someone who **stands** is someone who is strong and faithful when following Jesus. People who **fall** are those who fail to faithfully follow Jesus and whom God punishes, just like he punished the Israelites. “Standing” and “falling” physically represent the spiritual state of the person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **stands** and **fall** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “he has firm footing ... he might not slip” or “he acts faithfully ... he might not fail” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### let him be careful that

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using words such as “should” or “needs to.” Alternate translation: “he needs to be careful that” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### he stands, let him be careful that he might not fall

Although **he** and **him** are masculine, Paul is using them to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **he** and **him** with non gendered words or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “he or she stands, let him or her be careful that he or she might not fall” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:13

### No temptation has seized you except {what is} common to humanity

If it would appear in your language that Paul was making a statement here and then contradicting it, you could reword this to avoid using an exception clause. Alternate translation: “The only temptations that have seized you are those that are common to humanity” (See: **Connect — Exception Clauses (p.646)**)

### No temptation has seized you

Here, a **temptation** is spoken of as though it were a person who could “seize” someone. If this might be confusing for your readers, you could express this meaning in a nonfigurative way. Alternate translation: “You have encountered no temptation” or “No temptation has tempted you” (See: **Personification (p.748)**)

### No temptation & with the temptation

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **temptation**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “tempt.” Alternate translation: “Nothing that is tempting ... with what is tempting you” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### what is} common to humanity

Something that **{is} common to humanity** is something that many humans experience, and it is not unique to one or two people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **{what is} common to humanity** with a comparable phrase or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “what is usual for humans” or “what other people experience” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### you to be tempted

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **tempted** rather than focusing on who or what does the “tempting.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “someone” or “something” does it. Alternate translation: “someone to tempt you” or “anybody to tempt you” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### beyond what you are able

Here Paul speaks as if a **temptation** could be **beyond** what the Corinthians **are able** to handle. By speaking as if the **temptation** is too far in distance, Paul emphasizes that a **temptation** that is **beyond** would be one that the Corinthians could not resist, just as they could not reach a place that is **beyond** them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “above what you are able” or “so that you are not able” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### you are able

Here Paul omits what the Corinthians **are able** to do. If your language would state what they **are able** to do, you could include a word or phrase that would be used for “resisting” a temptation. Alternate translation: “you are able to withstand” or “you are able to endure” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## the way of escape

Here Paul speaks of a **temptation** as if it were a trap that had a **way of escape**. By speaking in this way, Paul tells the Corinthians that God always provides a way to deal with a **temptation**, just as if a trap always had a **way of escape**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **way of escape** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “the way out” or “the way to withstand it” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## the way of escape, {so that} you will be able to endure it

Here, **{so that} you will be able to endure it** could: (1) state the result of God giving **the way of escape**. Alternate translation: “the way of escape, with the result that you will be able to endure it” (2) define **the way of escape**. Alternate translation: “the way of escape, which is being able to endure it” (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.650)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:14

my beloved ones

### Connecting Statement:

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **beloved** rather than focusing on the person doing the “loving.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that he himself loves them. Alternate translation: “people whom I love” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

flee from

Just as in [6:18](#), here Paul wants the Corinthians to avoid **idolatry** as urgently as if it were an enemy or danger that they might **flee from**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “carefully stay away from” or “fight against” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

idolatry

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **idolatry**, you can express the idea by using a phrase such as “worshiping other gods” or “serving idols.” Alternate translation: “serving idols” or “worshiping idols” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:15

### as to sensible {people}

Paul here uses **as**, but he means that he thinks he really is speaking to **sensible {people}**. If your language does not use **as** if what it introduces is certain or true, and if your readers might think that what Paul is saying is not certain, then you can express the idea by identifying the Corinthians as **sensible {people}**. Alternate translation: “to you like this because you are sensible people” Corinthians as **sensible {people}**. Alternate translation: “to you like this because you are sensible people” or “like someone who is talking to reasonable people” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.648)**)

### what I say

Here, **what I say** refers to what Paul is about to say in the next verses (especially [10:16–22](#)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **what I say** with a form that naturally refers to the next sentences. Alternate translation: “what I will say” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)



## 1 Corinthians 10:16

### The cup of blessing

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe a **cup** that is characterized by **blessing**. This phrase identifies a specific **cup**, here, the **cup** used in the Lord's Supper. If your language does not use the possessive form to express that idea, you can identify the **cup** as the one used in the Lord's Supper. Alternate translation: "The cup in the Lord's Supper" (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### The cup

Here the Corinthians would have understood **cup** to refer to the drink inside the **cup**, which in Paul's culture would have been wine. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **cup** by more explicitly referring to what would be in the **cup**. Alternate translation: "The drink" or "The wine" (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

### of blessing

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **blessing**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "bless." Alternate translation: "that blesses and" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### we bless, is it not a sharing of the blood of Christ

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is "yes, it is." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong affirmation. Alternate translation: "we bless is certainly a sharing of the blood of Christ." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### a sharing of the blood of Christ? & a sharing of the body of Christ

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe a **sharing** that "shares in" the **blood** and **body** of Christ. This could refer primarily to: (1) communion in or union with Christ himself. Alternate translation: "communion with the blood of Christ ... communion with the body of Christ" (2) being joined together with other believers, which comes from sharing in the **blood** and **body** of Christ. Alternate translation: "sharing in fellowship based on the blood of Christ ... sharing in fellowship based on the body of Christ" (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### we break, is it not a sharing of the body of Christ

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is "yes, it is." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong affirmation. Alternate translation: "we break is certainly a sharing of the body of Christ." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### we break

Here, to **break** bread refers to taking a large loaf and splitting it up into pieces so that many people can eat the pieces. By using **we break**, Paul is referring to many people together eating **bread**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **we break** with a word or phrase in your language that refers to how people eat **bread** while still emphasizing that many people eat the **bread**. Alternate translation: "we eat together" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:17

### **Because {there is} one bread, we the many {are} one body; for we all partake from the one bread**

Here Paul presents his argument by stating a premise, a conclusion, and then another premise. If your language would naturally state both premises before the conclusion, you could rearrange these clauses. Alternate translation: "Because there is one bread, and we all partake from the one bread, we who are many are one body" (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### **there is} one bread, & the one bread**

Here Paul speaks of **one bread** because he has in mind one "loaf" of **bread** from which **we** would eat pieces. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **one bread** with a word or phrase that refers to one loaf of **bread**. Alternate translation: "there is one loaf ... the one loaf" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### **we the many {are} one body**

Here Paul is speaking as if those who **partake from the one bread** together share **one body**. He speaks in this way to emphasize the unity that these people have when they eat the **one bread**, which is as close as if they had only one body. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "we who are many share all things together" or "we who are many are united together" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:18

### Israel according to the flesh

Here, **according to the flesh** identifies **Israel** as a reference to the people who are physically descended from Abraham and part of the nation of **Israel**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **according to the flesh** with a word or phrase that refers to physical descent or genealogy. Alternate translation: “ethnic Israel” or “Israel by physical descent” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### are not the ones eating the sacrifices partakers of the altar

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “yes, they are.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong affirmation. Alternate translation: “those who are eating the sacrifices are certainly partakers of the altar.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### the ones eating the sacrifices

Here Paul refers to how the priests would offer some of a sacrifice to God, while the person who gave the sacrifice and others with that person would eat the rest. In this way, the person who gave the sacrifice shared the food with God and with others. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **who are eating the sacrifices** by clarifying what Paul has in mind in the text or in a footnote. Alternate translation: “those who eat the rest of the sacrifices after the priest has offered the best parts to God” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### partakers of the altar

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **partakers** who “partake in” **the altar**. This could refer primarily to: (1) “partaking” in or coming into union with **the altar** and what it represents. Alternate translation: “partaking in the altar” (2) being joined together with other Israelites, which comes from “partaking” in **the altar**. Alternate translation: “partaking in fellowship based on the altar” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### of the altar

Here Paul uses **altar** as a way to refer to the altar itself and what the priests did at the altar, including sacrificing animals to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **altar** by clarifying that Paul has in mind what happens at **the altar**. Alternate translation: “of the worship of God at the altar” (See: **Synecdoche (p.773)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:19

### What am I saying then: that

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question introduces a clarifying statement from Paul. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a statement that introduces a clarification. Alternate translation: “Here is what I want to clarify: is it true that” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### What am I saying then

Here Paul is referring to what he has said in his argument about idols and things sacrificed to them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that Paul is referring to what he has said so far by stating that more clearly. Alternate translation: “What does what I have argued imply, then” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### food} sacrificed to idols

Just as in 8:1, here Paul speaks about animals that are slaughtered, offered to a god, and then eaten. For many people in Paul’s culture, this was the only meat that was available for them to eat. In many cases, people would eat this meat at a god’s temple or shrine. However, sometimes the meat could be sold to people who would then eat it in their homes. In the next verses, Paul will speak about whether and how Christians should eat or not eat this meat. If your language has a specific word or phrase for meat from an animal that has been offered to a god, you could use it here. If your language does not have such a word, you can use a descriptive phrase. Alternate translation: “meat from animals sacrificed to idols” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### food} sacrificed to idols

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what is **sacrificed** rather than focusing on the person doing the “sacrificing.” If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: “food that people have sacrificed to idols” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### then: that {food} sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “no, they are not.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negation. Alternate translation: “then? Food sacrificed to idols is nothing, and an idol is nothing.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### is anything, & is anything

Here, **is anything** could ask about: (1) whether **{food} sacrificed idols** and **an idol** are significant or important. Alternate translation: “is significant ... is significant” (2) whether **{food} sacrificed to idols** and **an idol** are real or not. Alternate translation: “is real ... is real”

## 1 Corinthians 10:20

### Rather, that

Here Paul omits some words that may be required in your language to make a full sentence. If your language needs these words, you could supply some from the previous verse (10:19). Alternate translation: "Rather, I am saying that" (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### that what the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice

Here Paul states the object before the verb. If your language would always put the object after the verb, you could rearrange this clause. Alternate translation: "that the Gentiles sacrifice what they sacrifice" (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### But

Here, **But** introduces a development in the argument. It does not introduce a strong contrast. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **But** with a word or phrase that introduces the next step in an argument. Alternate translation: "Now" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### partakers with the demons

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **partakers** who "partake in" **the demons**. This could refer primarily to: (1) "partaking" in or joining in union with **the demons**. Alternate translation: "partaking in the demons" (2) being joined together with nonbelievers, which comes from "partaking" in **the demons**. Alternate translation: "partaking in fellowship based on the demons" (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:21

### You are not able to drink & You are not able to partake of the table

Here Paul states that they **are not able** to do both of these things even though he knows that they can physically do both of these things. The Corinthians would have understood him to mean that it is shocking and unthinkable to do both of these things. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **You are not able** with a strong command or a statement of how bad doing both these things would be. Alternate translation: "You should never drink ... You should never partake of the table" or "It is very wrong to drink ... It is very wrong to partake of the table" (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

### the cup & the cup

Here the Corinthians would have understood **cup** to refer to the drink inside **the cup**, which in Paul's culture would have been wine. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **cup** by more explicitly referring to what would be in **the cup**. Alternate translation: "the drink ... the drink" or "the wine in the cup ... the wine in the cup" (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

### the cup of the Lord & the cup of demons. & of the table of the Lord & of the table of demons

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe "cups" and "tables" that are associated with **the Lord** or with **demons**. The **cup** and the **table** would be used in ceremonies or worship connected to either **the Lord** or the **demons**. If your language does not use the possessive form to express that idea, you can state it in another way. Alternate translation: "the cup used to worship the Lord ... the cup used to worship demons ... of the table used to worship the Lord ... of the table used to worship demons" (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### of the table & of the table

Here the Corinthians would have understood **table** to refer to the food on **the table**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **table** by more explicitly referring to what would be on **the table**. Alternate translation: "of the bread ... of the bread" or "of the food on the table ... of the food on the table" (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:22

### Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy

The word **Or** introduces an alternate to what Paul speaks about in [10:21](#). If they do indeed participate in meals connected to the Lord and also meals connected to demons, they will **provoke the Lord to jealousy**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Or** with a word or phrase that signifies a contrast or gives an alternative. Alternate translation: "If we do both of these things, do we not provoke the Lord to jealousy" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is "no, we should not." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong command. Alternate translation: "Do not provoke the Lord to jealousy." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### do we provoke the Lord to jealousy

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **jealousy**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as "jealous." Alternate translation: "do we provoke the Lord to be jealous" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p. 618)**)

### We are not stronger than him, are we

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is "no, we are not." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negation. Alternate translation: "We are certainly not stronger than him." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:23

### All {things are} lawful," but not all {things are} beneficial. "& are} lawful," but not all things build up

Here, just as in 6:12, Paul repeats **All {things are} lawful for me** to make two separate comments on the statement. By repeating **All {things are} lawful for me**, Paul emphasizes his qualifications or objections to this statement. If your language does not use repetition in this way, you can state **All {things are} lawful for me** once and include both comments after that. Alternate translation: "'All things are lawful for me,' but not all things are beneficial, and not all things build up" (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)

### All {things are} lawful," but & All {things are} lawful," but

In this verse, just as in 6:12, Paul twice quotes what some people in the Corinthian church are saying. By using quotation marks, the ULT indicates that these claims are quotations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **All {things are} lawful for me** and think that Paul is claiming this by clarifying that some of the Corinthians are saying this, and Paul is saying the words that occur after **but**. Alternate translation: "You say, 'All things are lawful for me,' but I respond that ... You say, 'All things are lawful for me,' but I respond that" (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

### not all {things & not all things

Alternate translation: "only some things ... only some things"

### are} beneficial. "& build up

Here Paul does not say to whom everything is not **beneficial** and who is the one who is not "built up." He could be implying that it is: (1) other believers within the Corinthian community. Alternate translation: "are beneficial to others ... build others up" (2) the person or people who say that **All {things are} lawful**. Alternate translation: "are beneficial for you ... build you up" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### not all things build up

Just as in 8:1, Paul here speaks as if believers were a building that one could **build up**. With this metaphor, he emphasizes that only some things help believers become stronger and more mature, just like building a house makes it strong and complete. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this figure of speech plainly or with a comparable metaphor. Alternate translation: "not all things enable believers to grow" or "not all things edify" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)



## 1 Corinthians 10:24

### Let no one seek

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “must.” Alternate translation: “No one should seek” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### his own

Here, **his** is written in masculine form, but it refers to anyone, no matter what their gender might be. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **his** by using a word that does not have gender, or you could use both genders. Alternate translation: “his or her own” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p. 785)**)

### his own good, but that of the other {person}

Here Paul speaks of a **good** that belongs to oneself or to another person. By this, he refers to what is **good** for oneself or for **the other {person}**. If your language does not use the possessive form to express that idea, you can clarify that the **good** is “for” somebody. Alternate translation: “what is good for himself, but what is good for the other person” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### but that of the other {person}

This phrase leaves out some words that many languages might need to be complete. If it would be helpful in your language, you could supply these words from the first half of the verse. Alternate translation: “but let each person seek the good of the other person” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### of the other {person}

Paul is speaking of other people in general, not of one particular **other {person}**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the other {person}** with a form that does refer generically to people in your language. Alternate translation: “of every other person” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:25

### in the market

Here, **the market** is the public place where meat and other foods were **sold**. At least sometimes, meat that came from sacrifices to idols would be sold in this **market**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could include a footnote to explain the context and say why Paul is speaking about **the market**. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### is being sold

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what is **sold** rather than focusing on the person doing the “selling.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “butchers” or “sellers” do it. Alternate translation: “butchers sell” or “people sell” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### asking

Here Paul does not state what they are **asking** about, since the Corinthians would have understood him without these words. He implies that they would be **asking** about whether the food has been involved in idol worship or not. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **asking** to provide an object for **asking**, or you could explicitly state what Paul implies. Alternate translation: “asking about its origin” or “asking about whether someone has offered it to an idol” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### asking for the sake of the conscience

Here, **for the sake of conscience** could give the reason for: (1) the **asking**. In this case, Paul is saying that the **asking** is **for the sake of conscience**, but they should not be worried about **conscience** in this case. Alternate translation: “asking on account of the conscience” (2) why they can **Eat everything without asking**. In this case, Paul is saying that they should eat **without asking** because if they did ask, their **conscience** might condemn them. Alternate translation: “asking. Do this for the sake of the conscience” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### the conscience

Here, **the conscience** identifies the **conscience** of the people who are buying the food **in the market**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **the conscience** with a form that more clearly identifies the **conscience** as belonging to the people who buy the food. Alternate translation: “your consciences” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:26

### For

In Paul's culture, **For** a normal way to introduce a quotation from an important text, in this case, the Old Testament book titled "Psalms" (See: [Psalm 24:1](#)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable phrase that indicates that Paul is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: "For it can be read in the Old Testament," or "For it says in the book of Psalms," (See: [Quotations and Quote Margins \(p.761\)](#))

### For "the earth {is} the Lord's, and the fullness of it

If you do not use this form in your language, you could translate these statements as indirect quotes instead of as direct quotes. Alternate translation: "For it says that the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness of it" (See: [Direct and Indirect Quotations \(p.668\)](#))

### the earth {is} the Lord's, and the fullness of it

Here, the passage that Paul quotes includes a second thing that is **the Lord's** after the **earth**. In the author's culture, this was good poetic style. If it would be helpful in your language, you could put **the earth** and **the fullness of it** together. Alternate translation: "the earth and the fullness of it are the Lord's" (See: [Information Structure \(p.716\)](#))

### and the fullness of it

Here Paul omits some words that may be required in your language to make a full sentence. You could supply words from the first half of the verse to complete the thought. Alternate translation: "and the fullness of it is also the Lord's" (See: [Ellipsis \(p.678\)](#))

### the fullness of it

Here, **fullness** refers to everything that is connected with **the earth**, including people, animals, natural resources, and anything else that goes with **the earth**. Use a natural way to refer to everything connected with **the earth** in your language. Alternate translation: "everything in it" (See: [Translate Unknowns \(p.780\)](#))

## 1 Corinthians 10:27

### If

Here Paul uses **If** to introduce a true possibility. He means that an unbeliever might **invite you** and **you** might **want to go**, or this might not happen. He specifies the result for **if** the unbeliever does **invite you** and **if you** do **want to go**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by introducing it with a word such as “whenever.” Alternate translation: “Whenever” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### invite you

Here Paul implies that the unbeliever “invites them” to eat at the unbeliever’s house. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **invite you** by itself by clarifying what the invitation is for. Alternate translation: “invite you to eat at their home” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### everything being set before you

Here, **that is set before you** refers physically to a waiter or servant “setting” food on the table in front of the person eating. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this way of speaking about the food that one is served with a comparable phrase. Alternate translation: “that is on the table” or “that they offer to you” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### everything being set before

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what is **set** rather than focusing on the person doing the “setting.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that one of the “unbelievers” does it. Alternate translation: “that the unbeliever sets before” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### asking questions

Just as in **10:25**, here Paul does not state what they are **asking questions** about, since the Corinthians would have understood him without these words. He implies that they would be **asking questions** about whether the food has been involved in idol worship or not. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **asking questions** to provide an object for **asking questions** or to explicitly state what Paul implies. Alternate translation: “asking questions about its origin” or “asking questions about whether someone has offered it to an idol” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### asking questions for the sake of the conscience

Just as in **10:25**, **for the sake of conscience** could give the reason for: (1) **asking questions**. In this case, Paul is saying that **asking questions** is **for the sake of the conscience**, but they should not be worried about **the conscience** in this case. Alternate translation: “asking questions on account of the conscience” (2) why they can **eat everything without asking**. In this case, Paul is saying that they should eat **without asking** because if they did ask, their **conscience** might condemn them. Alternate translation: “asking. Do this for the sake of the conscience” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

## the conscience

Here, **the conscience** identifies **the conscience** of each of the people who are eating with **unbelievers**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **the conscience** with a form that more clearly identifies **the conscience** as belonging to the person who is eating with **unbelievers**. Alternate translation: “your consciences” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:28

### if

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that **someone** might tell **you** that the food is **offered in sacrifice**, or **someone** might not. He specifies the result for if the **someone** does tell **you**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by introducing it with a word such as “whenever.” Alternate translation: “Whenever” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### says to you, “This is offered in sacrifice

If you do not use this form in your language, you could translate this statement as an indirect quote instead of as a direct quote. Alternate translation: “says to you that the food was offered in sacrifice” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

### This is offered in sacrifice

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what is **sacrificed** rather than focusing on the person doing the “sacrificing.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “someone” does it. Alternate translation: “Someone offered this in sacrifice” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### This is offered in sacrifice

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **sacrifice**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “sacrifice.” Alternate translation: “This is sacrificed” or “This is offered” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### offered in sacrifice

Here, **offered in sacrifice** implies that the food was **offered** to an idol. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this implication explicitly. Alternate translation: “offered in sacrifice to an idol” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### having informed you

Alternate translation: “who told you about it”

### conscience

Here it is unclear whose **conscience** Paul is speaking about. If possible, preserve the ambiguity, because Paul will explain whose **conscience** he has in mind in the next verse. (See: **When to Keep Information Implicit (p.787)**)

### conscience

After **conscience**, some manuscripts include “For ‘the earth {is} the Lord’s, and the fullness of it.’” This seems to be an accidental repetition of [10:26](#). If possible, do not include this addition. (See: **Textual Variants (p.775)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:29

### now I say the conscience, not

Alternate translation: “now the conscience I am talking about is not”

### I say the conscience, not

Here Paul omits some words that may be required in your language to make a full sentence. If you need these words, you could supply a phrase such as “I mean.” Alternate translation: “when I say the conscience, I mean not” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### of the other {person}

Here, **the other {person}** is the one who spoke about how the food was “offered in sacrifice” in 10:28. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express who **the other {person}** is by clarifying to whom it refers. Alternate translation: “of the person who informed you” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### For

Here, **For** introduces further support for the point that Paul was making in 10:25–27 about how “conscience” is not significant for eating food at someone’s house. This means that 10:28–29a interrupt the argument. For ways to mark this in your translation, see the chapter introduction. If it would be helpful in your language, you could add some words that clarify that Paul is returning to an earlier argument in verse 27. Alternate translation: “In most cases, though,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### my freedom

Here Paul begins speaking in the first person in order to present himself as an example. What he says in 10:33 confirms that this is why he uses the first person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the first person here by clarifying that Paul is using himself as an example. Alternate translation: “my freedom, for example,” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.687)**)

### why {is} my freedom judged by another’s conscience

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “it should not be.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negation. Alternate translation: “my freedom is certainly not judged by another’s conscience.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### why {is} my freedom judged by another’s conscience

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **my freedom** that is **judged** rather than focusing on **another’s conscience**, which does the “judging.” Alternate translation: “why does another’s conscience judge my freedom” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## my freedom

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **freedom**, you can express the idea by using a relative clause with an adjective such as "free." Alternate translation: "what I am free to do" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)



## 1 Corinthians 10:30

### If

Here Paul uses **If** to introduce a true possibility. He means that someone might **partake with gratitude**, or someone might not. He specifies the result for if the person does **partake with gratitude**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **If** statement by introducing it with a word such as “whenever” or “given that.” Alternate translation: “Whenever” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### I & am I insulted & I

Here Paul continues speaking in the first person in order to present himself as an example. What he says in [10:33](#) confirms that this is why he uses the first person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the first person here by clarifying that Paul is using himself as an example. Alternate translation: “I, for example, ... am I insulted ... I” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.687)**)

### with gratitude

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **gratitude**, you can express the idea by using an adverb such as “gratefully” or an adjective such as “grateful.” Alternate translation: “gratefully” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### why am I insulted for that which I give thanks

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “you should not be.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negation. Alternate translation: “I must not be insulted for that which I give thanks.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### am I insulted

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on himself, who is **insulted**, rather than focusing on the person doing the “insulting.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that some other person does it. Alternate translation: “do they insult me” or “does someone insult me” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:31

### Therefore

Here, **Therefore** introduces the conclusion of what Paul has argued in [8:1–10:30](#). If you have a way to introduce the conclusion to an entire section, you could use it here. Alternate translation: “In conclusion” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do

Paul is speaking as if “eating,” “drinking,” and “doing” things were hypothetical possibilities, but he means that the Corinthians will do these things. If your language does not state something as a possibility if it is certain or true and if your readers might think that what Paul is saying is not certain, then you could translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: “when you eat or drink, or when you do anything” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.648)**)

### to the glory of God

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **glory**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “glorify.” Alternate translation: “to glorify God” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:32

### Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **offense**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “offend.” Alternate translation: “Do not offend either Jews or Greeks or the church of God” (See:

**Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God

Here the three groups to which Paul refers would include every person in Paul’s context. The **Jews** are those who practice Jewish customs and faith, while **the church of God** refers to everyone who believes in Jesus the Messiah. The word **Greeks** includes everyone else. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these three groups and think that Paul is leaving some people out by clarifying that Paul includes everyone. Alternate translation: “to anyone, whether Jews or Greeks or the church of God” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 10:33

### my own benefit & that of the many

Here Paul speaks of a **benefit** that belongs to him or to **many** others. By this, he refers to what is a **benefit** for himself or for the **many** others. If your language does not use the possessive form to express that idea, you can clarify that the **benefit** is “for” somebody. Alternate translation: “what is a benefit for me but what is a benefit for the many” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### my own benefit but that of the many

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **benefit**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “benefit.” Alternate translation: “what benefits me but what benefits the many” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### of the many

Paul is using the adjective **many** 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: “of many people” or “of everyone else” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### they might be saved

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **saved** rather than focusing on the person doing the “saving.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God might save them” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

# 1 Corinthians 11

## 1 Corinthians 11 General Notes

### Structure and Formatting

On food (8:1–11:1)

- Both freedom and care for others (10:23–11:1)

On head coverings (11:2–16)

- Heads and honor (11:2–7)
- Order for men and women (11:8–12)
- Argument from nature (11:13–16)

On the Lord's Supper (11:17–34)

- The problem at Corinth (11:17–22)
- The tradition from the Lord (11:23–26)
- Proper behavior at the Lord's Supper (11:27–34)

Many translations include 11:1 as the conclusion of the last section of chapter 10. Consider whether translations your readers are familiar with do this or not.

## Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

### The head

Paul refers frequently to “the head” in [11:2–10](#). In some places, “head” refers to a person’s body part: his or her head (See: the first occurrences of “head” in [11:4–5](#); see also [11:6–7](#); [11:10](#)). In other places, “head” is used to refer to a specific kind of relationship between persons (See: [11:3](#)). Sometimes, it is not clear which use of “head” Paul intends, and perhaps it could be both (See: especially the second occurrences of “head” in [11:4–5](#)). See the notes on these verses for translation options in context. For the figurative meaning of “head,” see the section below on “Head as metaphor.” (See: [\[\[rc://\\*/tw/dict/bible/other/head\]\]](#))

### Women and men

Throughout [11:2–16](#), Paul uses words that could identify “women” and “men” in general or that could more specifically refer to “wives” and “husbands.” Further, Paul refers to the story about how God created the first man and the first woman as it is told in [Genesis 2:15–25](#) (See: [11:8–9](#)). This means that Paul could be speaking about women and men in general, husbands and wives in general, or the first man and first woman whenever he uses the words “man” and “woman.” It is likely that Paul either meant women and men in general in every verse (the ULT models this option), or he had different nuances of the words “woman” and “man” in mind in different verses (the UST models this option). If your language has words that are general enough that they could indicate any of these possible nuances of “woman” and “man,” you could use those words in this chapter. (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## Head coverings

Paul's instructions in [11:2-16](#) about "head coverings" are not clear enough to indicate exactly what the Corinthians were doing or what exactly Paul wants them to do instead. There are multiple issues that are uncertain: (1) what is the "head covering" that Paul speaks about? (2) What does the "head covering" indicate in the Corinthians' culture? (3) Why would some women uncover their heads?

First (1), the "head covering" can be understood in roughly three ways: (a) a cloth that was worn on the top and back of the head, (b) long hair itself (it is unclear how long it would need to be to count as "long"), or (c) a specific hairstyle. The UST generally follows the interpretation that argues that the head covering is a "cloth." Other options are included in the notes.

Second (2), the "head covering" could be an indication of (a) proper gender distinctions between men (uncovered) and women (covered), (b) submission to authority (that is, a wife's submission to her husband), or (c) the honor and respectability of the woman (and men who are related to her). Of course, the "head covering" could indicate several of these options.

Third (3), women in Corinth might have uncovered their heads for several reasons: (a) they thought that the work of Jesus had nullified the importance of gender, so head coverings that indicated gender distinctions were unnecessary; (b) they thought that, in church worship, there was no hierarchy of authority based on gender or marriage, so head coverings that indicated submission to authority were unnecessary; or (c) they considered the whole group of believers to be family, so head coverings that indicated honor and respectability in public were unnecessary. Of course, several of these reasons might be true.

The number of interpretations and options indicates again how little we know about what Paul is talking about in [11:2-16](#). If possible, your translation should allow for all these interpretations since the original text of 1 Corinthians also does. For specific translation options and comments on specific issues, see the notes on the verses.

## "because of the angels"

In [11:10](#), Paul makes his claim that "the woman ought to have authority on the head," and then he gives a reason: "because of the angels." However, Paul does not state what about "angels" he has in mind. There are at least three important options for understanding what he could mean. First (1), sometimes the angels are described as those who oversee the order of the world and especially of worship. The woman having "authority on the head" would satisfy what the angels require for worship practices. Second (2), sometimes the angels are described as sexually attracted to earthly women. The woman "ought to have authority on the head" to keep the angels from acting or being tempted to act sexually with these women. Third (3), sometimes angels are described as involved in the worship of the community. The woman "ought to have authority on the head" as a sign of respect to them. Paul's sentence does not specify anything beyond the fact that "the angels" are a reason for the "authority on the head," so the best translation also expresses "the angels" as the reason without choosing between options. (See **angel**, **archangel** (p.791))

## The issue with the Lord's Supper

In [11:17-34](#), Paul corrects how the Corinthians are practicing the Lord's Supper. Since the Corinthians would know the problem he is addressing, Paul himself is not very specific about it. The clearest hints about what the problem is can be found in [11:21](#) and [11:33](#). From these two verses, the problem with how the Corinthians are practicing the Lord's Supper can be understood in primarily three ways. First (1), the people who arrived first began to eat right away without waiting for everyone else to gather. Because of this, they would have too much to eat and drink, and those who arrived later would not get enough. Second (2), some people, especially those who were more wealthy or powerful, would bring or receive special food and more of it than other people. Third (3), some people might not be showing hospitality or offering to share food with others who did not have their own houses or lots of food. If

possible, your translation should allow for readers to accept several or all three of these possible understandings. See the notes for specific translation options, especially the notes on [11:21](#) and [11:33](#). (See: **Lord's Supper (p.803)**)

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Rhetorical questions

In [11:13–15](#) and [22](#), Paul uses rhetorical questions. He is not asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to provide him with information. Rather, he is asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to think about how they are acting and what they are thinking. The questions encourage them to think along with Paul. For ways to translate these questions, look for the notes on each verse that includes these kinds of questions. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### Head as metaphor

As noted above, “head” functions in [11:3–5](#). The two most common understandings are these: (1) “head” is a metaphor for authority, and (2) “head” is a metaphor for source. A third (3) option is to understand “head” as a metaphor for whom one represents or to whom one brings honor. Of course, some or all of these three options could be understood as part of the “head” metaphor. What is clear is that Paul uses “head” at least partly because he wants to connect the figurative use of “head” with the nonfigurative use of “head” for the body part. Because of this connection, you should try to express the “head” metaphor with a word that refers to the body part. For specific issues and translation options, see the notes on [11:3–5](#). (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/other/head\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#))

### Metaphor with bread and cup

In [11:24–25](#), Jesus identifies bread as “my body” and the wine in a cup as “the new covenant in my blood.” These metaphors can be understood in at least three primary ways: (1) the bread and wine somehow become Jesus’ body and blood; (2) Jesus’ body and blood are present, physically or spiritually, in the bread and wine; or (3) the bread and wine memorialize or symbolize Jesus’ body and blood. Christians are divided on this question, and metaphors that link body and blood to bread and wine are very significant in the Bible and in Christian teaching. For these reasons, it is best to preserve these metaphors without expressing them as similes or in another nonfigurative way. If you must express them in another way, see the notes on [11:24–25](#) for translation possibilities. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/body\]\]](#), [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/blood\]\]](#), [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/other/bread\]\]](#), and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#))

### Legal language

In [11:27–32](#), Paul uses a number of words that would normally be used in a court of law or in other legal settings. These words include “guilty,” “examine,” “discern,” “judge,” and “condemn.” If possible, use words related to legal settings or courts of law in your translation of these verses.

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Translating gendered words

In [11:2–16](#), Paul uses masculine and feminine words to identify when he is addressing men and when he is addressing women. Unlike in most of the previous chapters, then, you should intentionally preserve most of the gendered language in this chapter. The notes will identify any cases of gendered language that could refer to all people. If there is no note, assume that the gendered language is functioning to distinguish between genders. (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## Are 11:8–9 a parenthesis?

Some translations mark 11:8–9 as an interruption or parenthesis in Paul's argument. They do this because 11:10 seems to draw a conclusion from the point made at the end of 11:7. However, it is also quite possible that 11:10 draws its conclusion from all of 11:7–9. Because of that, neither the UST nor the ULT marks 11:8–9 as a parenthesis. Consider whether translations your readers are familiar with use parentheses here or not.

## Different accounts of the Last Supper

In 11:23–25, Paul recounts the tradition of the Last Supper, which is the last meal Jesus had with his closest disciples before he was arrested and put to death. Paul uses this story to explain how the Corinthians should act at the Lord's Supper, so he considers the Last Supper the time when Jesus began the practice of what we call the Lord's Supper. The same story can be found in very similar form in [Luke 22:19–20](#) and in slightly different form in [Matthew 26:26–29](#) and [Mark 14:22–25](#). You should translate the story as you find it here without making it the same as the other accounts.

## “First, ... ”

In 11:18, Paul uses “first” to introduce his instructions about the Lord's Supper. However, he never goes on to use “second.” Most likely, he did not think he had enough time or space to cover further commands, which would have been about the Lord's Supper, related issues of worship, or something else. In 11:34, he says “Now {about} the remaining things, I will give directions when I come.” Perhaps these “remaining things” included what he planned to introduce with “second” and “third” but never did. Consider whether your readers would be confused by a “first” without a “second.” If so, you could make it clearer that 11:34 refers to “second” (and so on) instructions.



## **1 Corinthians 11:1**

**Be imitators of me, just as I also {am} of Christ**

### **Connecting Statement:**

Alternate translation: "Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ"

## 1 Corinthians 11:2

### Now

Here, **Now** introduces a whole new section in Paul's argument. He **Now** begins speaking about proper behavior during worship. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Now** with a word or phrase that introduces a new topic or leave it untranslated. Alternate translation: "Next," (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases** (p.662))

### me

Here, **me** refers specifically to what Paul teaches and how Paul behaves. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **me** by clarifying exactly what about **me** Paul has in mind. Alternate translation: "my doctrine and behavior" (See: **Metonymy** (p.736))

### in all things

Here, **all things** refers to anything the Corinthians might do. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in all things** with a word or phrase that expresses the same idea in your language. Alternate translation: "all the time" or "when you do anything" (See: **Idiom** (p.710))

### you hold firmly to the traditions

Here Paul speaks as if **the traditions** were something physical that the Corinthians would **hold firmly to**. By using this figure of speech, Paul wishes to emphasize that the Corinthians are believing the traditions and acting in line with them as carefully and consistently as if they were physically holding on to them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **hold firmly** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "you keep the traditions" or "you follow the traditions" (See: **Metaphor** (p.730))

### to the traditions

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **traditions**, you can express the idea by using a relative clause with a verb such as "teach" or "learn." Alternate translation: "to the things you learned from me" (See: **Abstract Nouns** (p.618))

### I delivered them to you

Here Paul speaks as if the **traditions** were a physical object that he **delivered** to the Corinthians. By speaking in this way, he emphasizes that he truly taught them **the traditions**, and they now know these **traditions** as well as if they held them in their hands. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "I instructed you" or "I told them to you" (See: **Metaphor** (p.730))

## 1 Corinthians 11:3

### Now

Here, **Now** could introduce: (1) a new topic or a new focus on a specific issue. Alternate translation: "Particularly," (2) a contrast with 11:2, which would imply that here the Corinthians are not "holding firmly to the traditions." Alternate translation: "However," (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases** (p.662))

### Christ is the head of every man, and the man {is} the head of a woman, and God {is} the head of Christ

Here Paul speaks as if someone could be **the head** of someone else. This is an important metaphor that Paul uses in many places, and it might contain elements of both of the possibilities in this note, so preserve the metaphor if possible. This figure of speech could refer to how the head: (1) functions as the source of life and existence for the body. The person who is identified as **the head** would function as the source of life and existence for the other person, and the other person is connected to the **head**. Alternate translation: "Christ is the source of every man, and the man is the source of a woman, and God is the source of Christ" (2) functions as the leader or director of the body. The person who is identified as **the head** would function as the authority over or leader of the other person. Alternate translation: "Christ has authority over every man, and the man has authority over a woman, and God has authority over Christ" (See: **Metaphor** (p.730))

### of every man

Here, **every man** could refer to: (1) male people. Paul is not saying that Christ is not **the head** of female people, but he is claiming that he is **the head** of male people. Alternate translation: "of every male person" (2) people in general, even though the word is masculine. Alternate translation: "of every person" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women** (p.785))

### the man {is} & of a woman

Here, **man** and **woman** could refer to: (1) a **man** and **woman** who are married to each other. Alternate translation: "the husband is ... of his wife" (2) any people who are male and female. Alternate translation: "the male person is ... of a female person" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information** (p.626))

### κεφαλή & γυναικὸς ὁ ἀνὴρ

Paul is speaking of "men" and "women" in general, not of one particular **man** and **woman**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to people in general. Alternate translation: "each man is the head of his woman" or "each man is the head of each woman" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases** (p.692))

## 1 Corinthians 11:4

### having something on his head

Here, **having something on his head** happens at the same time as **praying or prophesying**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the relationship between these events with a word or phrase that indicates that the events happen at the same time. Alternate translation: “while he has something on his head” (See: **Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship (p.660)**)

### having something on his head

Here, **something on his head** refers to a piece of clothing that would be worn on the top and back of the head. The phrase does not refer to hair or to some piece of clothing that obscures the face. Paul does not clarify, however, what kind of clothing this might be. If possible, use a general phrase that could refer to clothing. Alternate translation: “having a covering on his head” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p. 626)**)

### dishonors

Here, **dishonors** is a word that refers to shaming someone else or causing them to lose honor. Use a word or phrase in your language that refers to this idea. Alternate translation: “shames” or “takes honor away from” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### his head

Here, **his head** could refer to: (1) how [11:3](#) states that “Christ is the head of every man.” The phrase **his head** thus refers to “Christ” as the **head** of the man. Alternate translation: “Christ, his head” (2) the man’s physical **head**, which would mean that the man **dishonors** “himself.” Alternate translation: “his own head” or “himself” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

# 1 Corinthians 11:5

## with her head uncovered

Here, **with her head uncovered** could refer to: (1) not wearing a piece of clothing on the hair and back of the head. This piece of clothing would be similar to the one discussed in the last verse. Alternate translation: “without a cloth on the head” (2) not putting the hair up in a traditional hairstyle but instead letting it flow freely. Alternate translation: “with her hair unbound” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## dishonors

Here, **dishonors** is a word that refers to shaming someone else or causing them to lose honor. Use a word or phrase in your language that refers to this idea. Alternate translation: “shames” or “takes honor away from” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## her head

Here, **her head** could refer to: (1) how 11:3 states that “the man {is} the head of a woman.” The phrase **her head** thus refers to “the man” as the **head** of the woman. This man would be the woman's husband. Alternate translation: “her husband, her head” (2) again how 11:3 states that “the man is the head of a woman.” In this case, “the man” would refer to men in general. Alternate translation: “every man, her head” (3) the woman's physical **head**, which would mean that the woman **dishonors** “herself.” Alternate translation: “her own head” or “herself” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## it is

Here, **it** refers back to having **the head uncovered**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind what **it** refers to more clearly. Alternate translation: “having the head uncovered is” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## it is one and the same thing as having been shaved

Here, **one and the same thing** is a way to say that two things are similar or identical. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this phrase with a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “it is the same thing as having been shaved” or “this is just like having been shaved” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## as having been shaved

Here, **having been shaved** refers to the **head**. If you need to clarify what is being **shaved**, you could include **head**. Alternate translation: “as her head having been shaved” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## as having been shaved

In Paul's culture, a woman with a **shaved** head would experience shame and dishonor, and Paul assumes this for the sake of his argument. If that is not true in your culture, you might need to clarify that a **shaved** head was shameful for a woman. Alternate translation: “as having been shamefully shaved” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

**as having been shaved**

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the person who is **shaved** rather than focusing on the person doing the “shaving.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “someone” does it. Alternate translation: “as someone shaving her head” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:6

### if

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that **a woman** might **cover her head**, or she might not. He specifies the result for if the **woman does not cover her head**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by introducing it with a word such as “whenever.” Alternate translation: “whenever” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### does not cover her head, & let her cover her head

Just as in **11:5**, **not** “covering” the **head** could refer to: (1) not wearing a piece of clothing on the hair and back of the head. Alternate translation: “does not wear a cloth on her head ... let her wear a cloth on her head” (2) not putting the hair up in a traditional hairstyle but instead letting it flow freely. Alternate translation: “loosens her hair ... let her bind up her hair” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### let her hair also be cut off

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “needs to.” Alternate translation: “her hair also needs to be cut off” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### let her hair also be cut off

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the **hair**, which is **cut off**, rather than focusing on the person doing the “cutting.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “someone” does it. Alternate translation: “let a person cut her hair off also” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### if {it is

Paul is speaking as if this was 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 think that what Paul is saying is not certain, then you could translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: “because it is” or “since it is” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.648)**)

### to have her hair cut off or to be shaved

Here, **to have her hair cut off** refers to how **hair** is trimmed or cut much shorter. The phrase **to be shaved** refers to how **hair** can be cut so short that it is no longer visible. If your language has separate words for these two actions, you could use them here. If your language has only one word for cutting **hair** short, you could use just one word here. Alternate translation: “to have her hair cut short” (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)

### to have her hair cut off or to be shaved

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the **hair** that is **cut off** or **shaved** rather than focusing on the person doing the “cutting” or “shaving.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “someone” does it. Alternate translation: “to have someone cut her hair off or to shave her” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## let her cover her head

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “needs to.” Alternate translation: “she needs to cover her head” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)



## 1 Corinthians 11:7

### For

Here, **For** introduces further reasons why what Paul has argued about “covering heads” is true. If it would be helpful in your language, you could leave **For** untranslated or use a word or phrase that introduces further reasons. Alternate translation: “Here are more reasons why” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### ought not

This could indicate that the **man**: (1) should not **cover his head**. Alternate translation: “must not” (2) is not required to **cover his head**, but he can do what he wants to do. Alternate translation: “is under no obligation”

### to cover his head

Here, **to cover his head** refers to using a piece of clothing that would be worn on the top and back of the head. The phrase does not refer to hair or to some piece of clothing that obscures the face. Paul does not clarify, however, what kind of clothing this might be. If possible, use a general phrase that could refer to clothing. Alternate translation: “have a covering on his head” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### being

Here, **being** introduces a clause that gives a reason or basis for what he has already said. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection with a word or phrase that introduces a reason or basis. Alternate translation: “since he is” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### the image and glory of God

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **image** and **glory**, you can express the idea by using verbs such as “reflect” and “glorify.” Alternate translation: “one who reflects and glorifies God” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### the woman is the glory of man

Here, **woman** and **man** could refer to: (1) a **woman** and **man** who are married to each other. Alternate translation: “the wife is the glory of the husband” (2) any people who are male and female. Alternate translation: “the female person is the glory of the male person” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### the woman is the glory of man

Paul is speaking of “women” and “men” in general, not of one particular **woman** and **man**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to people in general. Alternate translation: “each woman is the glory of her man” or “women are the glory of men” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### the glory of man

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **glory**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “glorify.” Alternate translation: “the one who glorifies man” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:8

### For

Here, **For** introduces a basis for what Paul has claimed in 11:7, most specifically for the claim that “woman is the glory of man.” In 11:10, Paul gives the result of what he has claimed in 11:7. Because of this, in some languages 11:7–8 might seem like they interrupt the logic or argument. If that is true in your language, you could mark 11:7–8 as an interruption by using parentheses or some other natural form in your language. Alternate translation: “As a side note,” or “By the way,” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### man is not from woman, but woman {is} from man

Here Paul is speaking about a **man** and a **woman**. These words could refer to: (1) the first **man** and **woman** that God created: Adam and Eve. In the story in [Genesis 2:18–25](#), God has already made Adam. He makes Adam sleep, takes a rib from his side, and uses it to create a woman, Eve. In this sense, **woman {is} from man**. Alternate translation: “the first man was not from the first woman, but the first woman was from the first man” (2) “men” and “women” in general. In this case, Paul would be referring to the role that men play in procreation. Alternate translation: “men do not come from women, but women come from men” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:9

### For indeed

Here, **For indeed** introduces a second basis for what Paul has claimed in 11:7, most specifically for the claim that “woman is the glory of man.” In 11:10. However, Paul gives the result of what he has claimed in 11:7 in 11:10. Because of this, in some languages 11:7–8 might seem like they interrupt the logic or argument. If that is true in your language, you could mark 11:7–8 as an interruption by using parentheses or some other natural form in your language. Alternate translation: “As another side note,” or “Also by the way,” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship** (p.655))

### man was not created for the woman, but woman for the man

Again, Paul is speaking about a **man** and a **woman**. Just as in 11:8, these words could refer to: (1) the first **man** and **woman** that God created: Adam and Eve. In the story in [Genesis 2:18–25](#), God has already made Adam. God then has Adam name all the animals, but there was no “helper” for Adam. God then makes Eve as a “helper” for Adam. Alternate translation: “the first man was not created for the first woman, but the first woman was created for the first man” (2) “men” and “women” in general. In this case, Paul would be referring to the relationship between males and females in general or to the specific relationship between husbands and wives. Alternate translation: “men were not created for women, but women for men” or “husbands were not created for wives, but wives for husbands” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information** (p.626))

### man was not created

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **man**, who is **created**, rather than focusing on the person doing the “creating.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God did not create man” (See: **Active or Passive** (p.621))

### woman for the man

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them explicitly in the previous clause (**was created**). If your language does need these words, you could supply them from that clause. Alternate translation: “woman was created for the man” (See: **Ellipsis** (p. 678))

## 1 Corinthians 11:10

### Because of this the woman & because of the angels

Here, **For this reason** could refer to: (1) both what Paul said in 11:7 about how “the woman is the glory of man” and what he will say at the end of this verse about **the angels**. Alternate translation: “Because of how the woman is the glory of the man and because of the angels, the woman” (2) just what Paul has said in 11:7 about how “the woman is the glory of man.” Alternate translation: “Because of what I have said, the woman ... because of the angels” (3) just what Paul will say at the end of the verse about **the angels**. Alternate translation: “For this reason, that is, because of the angels, the woman” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### the woman

Here, **the woman** could refer to: (1) a female person. Alternate translation: “the female person” (2) a wife. Alternate translation: “the wife” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### the woman

Paul is speaking of “women” in general, not of one particular **woman**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to people in general. Alternate translation: “every woman” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### to have authority on the head

The phrase **have authority on the head** could refer to: (1) the **authority** that the “man” has over **the woman**. In this view, **authority** implies the head covering or long hair, which **the woman** wears as a sign of the man’s **authority** over her. Alternate translation: “to have a sign of the man’s authority on her head” (2) how the **woman** has **authority** over her own **head**. In other words, she has **authority** to decide what to wear or not wear on her head, or **authority** could imply the head covering or long hair, which **the woman** wears as a sign of her **authority** over herself. Alternate translation: “to have authority over her own head” or “to have a sign of her authority on her head” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### to have authority on

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **authority**, you can express the idea in a different way. Make sure you use a word or phrase that fits with the interpretation you chose in the last note. Alternate translation: “to rule over” or “to have someone rule over” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### the head

Here, **the** with **head** implies that **the head** belongs to the **woman**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this implication with a word that directly states possession. Alternate translation: “her head” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### because of the angels

Here, **because of the angels** clearly means that Paul considers **the angels** to be a reason for why **the woman ought to have authority on the head**, whichever meaning of that clause you decide on. However, what Paul means by the phrase **because of the angels** is not clear. Therefore, you also should leave your translation open so that your readers could draw any of the following conclusions. The phrase **because of the angels** could refer to:

(1) how the angels oversee the order of the world and especially worship. The **woman** having **authority on the head** would satisfy what the angels require for worship practices. Alternate translation: "because of what the angels require" (2) how the angels can be sexually attracted to earthly women, so **the woman ought to have authority on the head** to keep the angels from acting or being tempted to act sexually with women. Alternate translation: "because otherwise the angels would be tempted" (3) how the angels are present in the worship of the community, and **the woman** must **have authority on the head** as a sign of respect to them. Alternate translation: "because angels are present when you worship" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:11

### Nevertheless

Here, **Nevertheless** introduces a contrast or qualification of what Paul has been saying, especially with reference to 11:8-9. Use a word or phrase in your language that introduces a contrast or qualification of previous arguments. Alternate translation: “Even so” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### in the Lord

Here Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in the Lord** to describe the union of believers with Christ. In this case, being **in the Lord**, or united to the Lord, identifies the situation in which men and women are **not independent** from each other. Alternate translation: “in their union with the Lord” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### is} not independent from & nor {is} man independent from

Here Paul uses two negative words, **not** and **independent from**, to indicate a positive meaning. If your language does not use two negative words like this, you can instead use one positive word. Alternate translation: “is dependent on ... and man is dependent on” (See: **Litotes (p.724)**)

### woman {& man, & man & woman

Paul is speaking of “men” and “women” in general, not of one particular **man** and **woman**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to people in general. Alternate translation: “every woman ... men ... every man ... women” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:12

### the woman {& the man, & the man {& the woman

Paul is speaking of “men” and “women” in general, not of one particular **man** and **woman**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to people in general. Alternate translation: “every woman ... men ... every man ... women” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### even as the woman {is} from the man, so also the man {is} through the woman

Here, **even as the woman {is} from the man** refers back to the story about how God made the first woman, Eve, from a rib he took from the first man, Adam. Paul has already referred to this story in [11:8](#). Paul then compares this with how **the man {is} through the woman**. This clause refers to how women give birth to men. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind what these two clauses refer to more explicitly. Alternate translation: “even as the first woman came from the first man, so also men are born from women” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### all {things are} from God

Alternate translation: “God created all things”

## 1 Corinthians 11:13

### Judge for your own selves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God uncovered

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “no, it is not.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negation. If you do, you may need to include a phrase such as “and you will find” after **Judge for your own selves**, which by itself introduces a question and not a statement. Alternate translation: “Judge for your own selves, and you will find that it is not proper for a woman to pray to God uncovered.” or “Judge for your own selves whether it is proper for a woman to pray to God uncovered.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### proper for

Here, **proper** identifies behavior that most people in a culture would agree is “appropriate” or “right” for a certain people or situations. Use a word or phrase that identifies what is “appropriate” or “right” for someone or at some time. Alternate translation: “right for” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### uncovered

Just as in [11:5](#), **uncovered** could refer to: (1) not wearing a piece of clothing on the hair and back of the head. Alternate translation: “without a cloth on the head” (2) not putting the hair up in a traditional hairstyle but instead letting it flow freely. Alternate translation: “with her hair unbound” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)



## 1 Corinthians 11:14

### Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man might have long hair, it is a disgrace for him

This is the first part of a rhetorical question that continues into the next verse. Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “yes, it does.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong affirmation. If you use the following alternate translation, you will need to translate the beginning of the next verse as a separate affirmation. Alternate translation: “Even nature itself teaches you that if a man might have long hair, it is a disgrace for him.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### Does not even nature itself teach you

Here, **nature** is spoken of as though it were a person who could **teach** someone. Paul speaks in this way to emphasize what the Corinthians should learn from **nature**. If this might be confusing for your readers, you could express this meaning in a nonfigurative way. Alternate translation: “Does not even nature itself show you” or “Do you not understand from nature itself” (See: **Personification (p.748)**)

### nature itself

Here, **nature** refers to the way things work in the world. The word does not refer simply to the “natural world” but rather can include everything that exists and how it all functions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **nature** with a word or phrase that refers to “the way things work.” Alternate translation: “how the world itself works” or “what naturally happens” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### nature itself

Here, **itself** focuses attention on **nature**. If **itself** would not draw attention in this way in your language, you could express the attention or focus in another way. Alternate translation: “nature” or “nature indeed” (See: **Reflexive Pronouns (p.763)**)

### if a man might have long hair, it is a disgrace for him

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that **a man might have long hair**, or he might not. He specifies the result for **if a man does have long hair**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by introducing it with a word such as “when” or by avoiding the **if** structure. Alternate translation: “when a man has long hair, it is a disgrace for him” or “it is a disgrace for a man to have long hair” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### might have long hair

Here Paul uses a word that refers to someone letting his or her hair grow long. It is not clear how long the hair must be to count as **long hair**. Use a word or phrase that refers to what your culture would consider **long hair**. Alternate translation: “lets his hair grow long” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## it is a disgrace for him

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **disgrace**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “disgrace” or an adjective such as “disgraceful.” Alternate translation: “it disgraces him” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:15

### but if a woman might have long hair, it is glory for her

This is the second part of the rhetorical question that began in the last verse. Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “yes, nature does teach this.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong affirmation. If you use the following alternate translation, you should translate the previous verse as a separate affirmation. Alternate translation: “However, if a woman has long hair, it is glory for her.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### if a woman might have long hair, it is glory for her

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that **a woman might have long hair**, or she might not. He specifies the result for **if a woman** does **have long hair**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by introducing it with a word such as “when” or by avoiding the **if** structure. Alternate translation: “when a woman has long hair, it is glory for her” or “it is glory for a woman to have long hair” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### might have long hair

Just as in **11:14**, here Paul uses a word that refers to someone letting his or her hair grow long. It is not clear how long the hair must be to count as **long hair**. Use a word or phrase that refers to what your culture would consider **long hair**. Alternate translation: “grows her hair out” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### it is glory for her

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **glory**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “glorify” or an adjective such as “glorious.” Alternate translation: “it glorifies her” or “it is glorious for her” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### For the long hair has been given to her

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the **long hair** that **has been given** rather than focusing on the person doing the “giving.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God has given her the long hair” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### the long hair

Here Paul uses a word that refers to **the long hair** itself. It is not clear how long the hair must be to count as **long hair**. Use a word or phrase that refers to what your culture would consider **long hair**. Alternate translation: “grown-out hair” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### as a covering

This could refer to: (1) how **the long hair** is equivalent to or functions as **a covering**. Alternate translation: “to be a covering” (2) how **the long hair** functions “instead of” or as a replacement of **a covering**. Alternate translation: “instead of a covering”

## 1 Corinthians 11:16

### if

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that someone might be **contentious about this**, or someone might not. He specifies the result for **if anyone** is **contentious**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by introducing it with a word such as “whenever.” Alternate translation: “whenever” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### thinks to be contentious {about this

Alternate translation: “decides to pick a fight about this” or “considers starting a conflict about this”

### we

Here, **we** refers to Paul and others who proclaim the gospel with him. It does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.685)**)

### any such practice

Here, **any such practice** could refer to: (1) the **practice** that anyone who **thinks to be contentious** supports. Therefore, this **practice** would be for women to have “uncovered” heads. Alternate translation: “the practice that they have” or “the practice of women with uncovered heads” (2) being **contentious**. Alternate translation: “any such practice of being contentious” or “the practice of being contentious” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### nor the churches of God

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them explicitly in the previous clause (**do not have any such practice**). If your language does need these words, you could supply as many as are needed from that clause. Alternate translation: “nor do the churches of God” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:17

### But

Here, **But** introduces a new topic and also signals a contrast with what Paul said in 11:2 about being able to “praise” them. Here, he does **not praise** them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **But** with a word or phrase that introduces a new topic. If possible, preserve the contrast with 11:2. Alternate translation: “Now, however,” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### in commanding this

Here, **this** refers to what Paul is about to say about the Lord’s Supper. It does not refer back to what he has already said. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express what **this** refers to by clarifying that it refers to what Paul is about to say. Alternate translation: “in commanding what I am about to command” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### you come together

Throughout this chapter, **come together** refers to a group gathering in a specific place. Your language may say “go” or “gather” rather than “come” in contexts such as this. Use whatever is most natural. Alternate translation: “you go together” or “you gather together” (See: **Go and Come (p.694)**)

### not for the better but for the worse

Paul is using the adjectives **better** and **worse** as nouns in order to describe the results of the Corinthians’ behavior. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate these with noun phrase. Alternate translation: “not for better things but for worse things” or “not with better results but with worse results” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### not for the better but for the worse

Here Paul does not state for whom or what the “coming together” is **not for the better but for the worse**. The Corinthians would have understood him to mean that their behavior was **worse** and **not for the better** for people in their group and for how they glorify God. If your readers would not infer this information, you could state it more explicitly. Alternate translation: “not for the better for your group but for the worse” or “not for better glorifying God and serving others but for doing this worse” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:18

### first

If your language does not use ordinal numbers, you can use a cardinal number here. Alternate translation: “one” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.743)**)

### first

Here Paul uses **first**, but he never moves on to “second.” Most likely, Paul had in mind other things he wanted to say, but he either never mentions them or he tells the Corinthians in 11:34 that he will “give directions” about these “remaining things” when he visits them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **first** to make it clearer that Paul addresses the other items in 11:34.

### I hear {that

Here Paul does not state from whom he “heard” this information. He does this to avoid causing unnecessary conflict among the Corinthians based on who told things to Paul. If you must specify who spoke to Paul, you could use a vague or indefinite statement. Alternate translation: “I hear from somebody that” (See: **When to Keep Information Implicit (p.787)**)

### I hear {that

Here Paul is speaking as if he currently “is hearing” about the **divisions**. By speaking in the present tense, he emphasizes that this is information he received while or immediately before he wrote this letter. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the use of present tense with a tense that most naturally refers to when Paul was writing this letter. Alternate translation: “I have heard that” (See: **Predictive Past (p.754)**)

### in the church

Here, **in the church** is a spatial metaphor that speaks of **the church** as if it were a place in which the Corinthians could **come together**. Paul speaks in this way to indicate the situation in which the Corinthians **come together**: a gathering of believers that meet to worship God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in the church** by clarifying that the Corinthians are **the church** or are meeting to worship God. Alternate translation: “as the church” or “in a Christian meeting” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### divisions

Here, **divisions** refers to when one group splits into multiple different groups because they have different leaders, beliefs, or opinions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this word with a comparable noun or a short phrase that makes this clear. Alternate translation: “opposing parties” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### in part I believe it

Here, **in part** qualifies how much Paul “believes.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in part** with a word or phrase that identifies “part of” something. Alternate translation: “I believe part of it” or “I believe some of it” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:19

### For

Here, **For** introduces the reason for which Paul “in part believes” what he has “heard” (11:18). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **For** with a word or phrase that clearly gives a reason for why Paul “believes it.” Alternate translation: “In fact,” or “I do this since” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### it is necessary indeed for there to be factions among you, so that also the ones approved may become evident among you

This sentence could be: (1) a simple statement about how God uses **factions** to reveal **those who are approved**. Alternate translation: “God wishes to make evident among you those who are approved, and factions among you are a necessary part of this” (2) an ironic statement that identifies **factions** as the **necessary** result of people who want to show themselves off as **those who are approved**. Use a standard form in your language to indicate irony, especially with the phrase **those who are approved**, which would be spoken from the Corinthians’ perspective. Alternate translation: “some people consider it necessary indeed for there to be factions among you, so that they, who consider themselves to be ‘those who are approved,’ may display themselves publicly among you” (See: **Irony (p.719)**)

### factions

Here, **factions** has similar meaning to “divisions” in 11:18. The word **factions** focuses more on the content of the differing beliefs and practices than “divisions” does; “divisions” emphasizes the differences themselves. If your language can clearly express these distinctions, you could use words that express these two ideas. If your language does not clearly express these distinctions, you can translate **factions** with the same word you used for “divisions.” Alternate translation: “divisions” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### approved

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **approved** rather than focusing on the person doing the “approving.” If you must state who did the action, you must choose a subject that fits with whether you understand this sentence as ironic or not. The subject could be: (1) God, if the sentence is not ironic. Alternate translation: “whom God approves” (2) the people themselves, if the sentence is ironic. Alternate translation: “who approve of themselves” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### also the ones approved may become evident

Here Paul does not state how or why **the ones approved** will **become evident**. Depending on whether the sentence is ironic or not, **may become evident** could imply that: (1) the **factions** are God’s way of testing and revealing who is **approved**, since those who continue to genuinely believe are **approved**. This is the implication if the sentence is not ironic. Alternate translation: “God may reveal also those who are approved” (2) the **factions** are the means by which some people show off what they think about themselves as **approved**. This is the implication if the sentence is ironic. Alternate translation: “also those who are approved may show themselves off” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:20

### So then

Here, **So then** introduces an inference or result from the “divisions” and “factions” mentioned in [11:18-19](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **So then** to more clearly state what it draws an inference from. Alternate translation: “So then, since you have factions,” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### your coming together in one place

Here Paul uses both **come together** and **in one place** to emphasize the physical unity of the Corinthians when they meet. He does this in order to contrast this physical unity with the disunity that their eating practices show. If your language does not use two similar phrases for emphasis like Paul does, then you can use just one phrase and indicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “when you are all together” (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)

### it is not to eat the Lord's Supper

Here Paul does not explicitly state that the Corinthians **come together** in order **to eat the Lord's Supper**. However, he and the Corinthians would have understood this when he speaks about “coming together.” Paul's point is that they think they are eating **the Lord's Supper**, but what they are doing does not actually count as **the Lord's Supper**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state explicitly that the idea behind **it is not to eat the Lord's Supper** is that the Corinthians thought that they were eating **the Lord's Supper**, but Paul thinks that they are not. Alternate translation: “it is not the Lord's Supper that you are eating” or “you think that you are eating the Lord's Supper, but you are not” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)



## 1 Corinthians 11:21

### takes his own supper first

This could refer to: (1) how some of the Corinthians were receiving food before others were. This could mean that the people who received food first ate more than their fair share, using up all the food before others were served. Or it could mean that each of the Corinthians ate food that was prepared ahead of time specifically for each of them and in proportion to their social status. Alternate translation: “eats his own supper before others receive enough food” or “receives the food that was prepared for him ahead of time” (2) how some of the Corinthians were “devouring” their own food without sharing with others. Alternate translation: “devours his own supper” or “eats his own supper without sharing” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### his own

Although **his** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **his** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “his or her own” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### one is indeed hungry, but one is drunk

Here Paul repeats **one is** to introduce two of the results that come from **each one** taking **his own supper first**. He does not mean that only **one** person is **hungry** or **drunk**, and he does not mean that these are the only two options. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that naturally indicates possible, alternate results. Alternate translation: “some are indeed hungry, but others are drunk” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### one is indeed hungry, but one is drunk

Here Paul contrasts being **hungry** with being **drunk**. These two words are not natural opposites, but Paul uses them to imply their opposites in his contrast. He does this to avoid having a complicated contrast with four words instead of two. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the contrast between being **hungry** and **drunk** by using all four words. Alternate translation: “one is indeed hungry and thirsty, but one is stuffed and drunk” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:22

### do you certainly not have houses in {which} to eat and to drink

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “yes, we do have houses.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong statement. Alternate translation: “you definitely have houses in which to eat and to drink.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### do you certainly not have houses in {which} to eat and to drink

With this question, Paul implies that the eating behaviors he criticized in the last verse could be appropriate in one's own “house.” Paul's point here, then, is that if they want to “take their own suppers first” (11:21), they should be eating at their own **houses**. Behavior at the Lord's Supper needs to be different. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express why Paul asks this question more explicitly as it connects back to how the Corinthians are eating at the Lord's Supper. Alternate translation: “do you certainly not have houses in which you could eat and drink in any way you like” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### certainly not

The words translated **certainly not** are two negative words. In Paul's culture, two negative words made the question even more negative, which in this case expects a strong positive answer. English speakers would misunderstand two negatives, so the ULT expresses the idea with one strong negative. If your language can use two negatives as Paul's culture did, you could use a double negative here. If your language does not use two negatives in this way, you can translate with one strong negative, as the ULT does. Alternate translation: “surely not” (See: **Double Negatives (p.673)**)

### Or do you despise

The word **Or** introduces an alternate to what Paul asked in the first question. In that question, he reminded them that they do have **houses in which to eat and to drink**. With **Or**, then, Paul introduces the incorrect alternative: they could **despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing**. He introduces this incorrect alternate to show that the implication of his first question is true: they should be “eating” and “drinking” at home. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Or** with a word that signifies a contrast or gives an alternative. Alternate translation: “Rather, do you despise” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate the ones having nothing

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “we do not want to do these things.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong statement. Alternate translation: “However, you are the ones who despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### and humiliate

Here, **and** introduces the specific way in which some of the Corinthians **despise the church of God**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the function of **and** here with a word that more clearly indicates a specific example or a means. Alternate translation: “by humiliating” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

## the ones having nothing

Here, **the ones having nothing** is an exaggeration that the Corinthians would have understood to mean that these people do not **have** very much. Paul speaks in this way to emphasize the contrast between those who **have houses** and those **having nothing**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could qualify Paul's claim and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "those who have very little" (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

## What should I say to you

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is "we know that you are going to rebuke us." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong statement about what Paul is going to say. Alternate translation: "You know what I am going to say to you." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## Should I praise you for this

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is "no, you should not." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negation. Alternate translation: "I will definitely not praise you for this." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## Should I praise you for this? I do not praise you

Here Paul indicates that he will **not praise** the Corinthians by using both a rhetorical question and a negative statement. He uses both sentences in order to strongly emphasize how displeased he is. If your language does not use repetition for emphasis, and if your readers would not understand why Paul repeats the same idea, you could combine these two sentences into one strong negative statement. Alternate translation: "I will never praise you for this!" (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:23

### I received from the Lord what

This could refer to: (1) how Paul learned the tradition he is about to recount indirectly **from the Lord**. In other words, Paul learns about these things from others, who received the tradition directly from the Lord. Alternate translation: “from others who knew the Lord I received what the Lord himself did, which” (2) how Paul learned the tradition directly **from the Lord**. In other words, **the Lord** himself revealed this information to Paul. Alternate translation: “I received directly from the Lord what”

### on the night in which

Here, **on the night** states that the events that Paul will describe all happened “during” one specific **night**. Use a natural way to refer to “during the night” as the time in which the events occur. Alternate translation: “during the night when” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### on the night in which he was betrayed

Here Paul refers to the story about how Jesus was arrested. One of Jesus’ closest disciples, Judas Iscariot, made a deal with the religious leaders to “betray” Jesus to them (See: [Matthew 26:14–16](#); [Mark 14:10–11](#); [Luke 22:3–6](#)). After Jesus eats with his disciples and spends time praying, Judas leads the religious leaders to Jesus, and they arrest him (See: [Matthew 26:47–50](#); [Mark 14:43–46](#); [Luke 22:47–48](#); [John 18:2–12](#)). Paul is not primarily interested in this part of the story, but he mentions it to explain when Jesus **took bread**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express what **on the night in which he was betrayed** refers to with a footnote to explain the context or include some short, extra information. Alternate translation: “on the night in which he was handed over to die” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### he was betrayed

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **Jesus**, who was **betrayed**, rather than focusing on the person doing the “betraying.” If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that “Judas Iscariot” did it. Alternate translation: “Judas betrayed him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### the Lord Jesus, & took bread

Beginning here and continuing in [11:24–25](#), Paul tells the story of what is often called “The Last Supper.” This is Jesus’ last meal with his closest disciples before his death, and Paul narrates some things that he said and did during this last meal. Since Paul himself states the details, you should not need to state anything more explicitly than he does. The story of “The Last Supper” can also be found in [Matthew 26:20–29](#); [Mark 14:17–25](#); [Luke 22:14–23](#). (See: **When to Keep Information Implicit (p.787)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:24

### he broke {it

Here, “breaking bread” refers to taking a large loaf and splitting it up into pieces so that many people can eat the pieces. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **he broke {it}** with a word or phrase in your language that refers to how people eat bread. Alternate translation: “he split it up” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### said, “This is my body, {which is} for you. Do this in the remembrance of me

If you do not use this form in your language, you could translate these statements as indirect quotes instead of as direct quotes. Alternate translation: “said that this was his body, which is for you, and that you should do this in remembrance of him” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

### This is my body

Here Paul refers to how Jesus identified the “bread” as his **body**. This figure of speech has been interpreted in a number of ways. The “bread” could somehow become Jesus’ **body**, or Jesus’ **body** could be present in some way when people eat the “bread,” or the “bread” could represent or memorialize Jesus’ **body**. Because of the variety of interpretations and the significance of this metaphor, you should preserve the metaphor if there is any way to do so. If you must express the metaphor in a different way, use a form that could fit with as many of the listed interpretations as possible. Alternate translation: “This functions as my body” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### which is} for you

Here, **for you** refers to how Jesus offered his **body** by dying **for you**, that is, those who believe in him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind what **for you** implies more explicitly. Alternate translation: “which is sacrificed for you” or “which I will sacrifice for you” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### Do this

Here, **this** could refer to: (1) doing what Jesus has done, including “taking bread,” **giving thanks**, “breaking it” and eating it. Alternate translation: “Perform this ceremony” or “Do these things” (2) just eating the bread. Alternate translation: “Eat this bread” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### in the remembrance of me

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **remembrance**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “remember.” Alternate translation: “to remember me” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### of me

When Jesus here refers to **me**, he is referring more specifically to what he has done and will do for his followers, particularly how he is about to offer himself **for you**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **me** and think that Jesus is just speaking about personal memory by clarifying that **me** refers to particular actions done by **me**. Alternate translation: “of what I am doing for you” or “of how I am going to die for you” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:25

### In the same way also the cup

Here Paul omits some words that may be needed in your language to complete the thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them ("he took") in 11:23, and the Corinthians would have understood them from that verse. If your language does need these words, you could supply them here. Alternate translation: "in the same way also he took the cup" (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### the cup & cup

Here the Corinthians would have understood **cup** to refer to the drink inside **the cup**, which in Paul's culture would have been wine. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **cup** by more explicitly referring to what would be in **the cup**. Alternate translation: "the drink ... drink" or "the wine ... wine" (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

### saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink {it}, in the remembrance of me

If you do not use this form in your language, you could translate these statements as indirect quotes instead of as direct quotes. Alternate translation: "saying that this cup was the new covenant in his blood, and that you should do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of him" (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

### This cup is the new covenant in my blood

Here Paul refers to how Jesus identified the **cup** as **the new covenant in my blood**. This figure of speech has been interpreted in a number of ways. The wine in the **cup** could somehow become Jesus' **blood**, or Jesus' **blood** could be present in some way when people drink from the **cup**, or the wine in the **cup** could represent or memorialize Jesus' **blood**. Because of the variety of interpretations and the significance of this metaphor, you should preserve the metaphor if there is any way to do so. If you must express the metaphor in a different way, use a form that could fit with as many of the listed interpretations as possible. Alternate translation: "This cup represents the new covenant in my blood" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### in my blood

Here, **in my blood** is a spatial metaphor that could refer to: (1) how the **new covenant** has been inaugurated or initiated by Jesus' **blood**. Alternate translation: "initiated by my blood" (2) how the **cup** can be identified with **the new covenant**. Alternate translation: "because of my blood" or "because it contains my blood" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### Do this

Here, **this** could refer to: (1) doing what Jesus has done, including everything he did with **the cup**. Alternate translation: "Perform this ceremony" or "Do these things" (2) just drinking from the **cup**. Alternate translation: "Drink from the cup" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### as often as you drink {it}

Here, **{it}** refers to **the cup** and thus also the drink inside **the cup**. This does not mean that believers are supposed to **Do this** every time they drink from any cup. Rather, whenever they **drink** from **the cup** in the context of the **remembrance** of Jesus, they should **Do this**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **as often**

**as you drink it** to identify more clearly what **it** means. Alternate translation: “as often as you drink from the cup in this ceremony” or “as often as you drink from the cup” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## **in the remembrance of me**

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **remembrance**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “remember.” Alternate translation: “to remember me” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## **of me**

When Jesus here refers to **me**, he is referring more specifically to what he has done and will do for his followers, particularly how he is about to offer himself for them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **me** and think that Jesus is just speaking about personal memory by clarifying that **me** refers to particular actions done by **me**. Alternate translation: “of what I am doing for you” or “of how I am going to die for you” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:26

### this cup

Here the Corinthians would have understood **cup** to refer to the drink inside the **cup**, which in Paul's culture would have been wine. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **cup** by more explicitly referring to what would be in the **cup**. Alternate translation: "what is in this cup" or "this wine" (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

### the death of the Lord

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **death**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "die." Alternate translation: "that the Lord died" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### until he would come

Here, **until he would come** refers specifically to Jesus "coming back" to earth, an idea Paul has already mentioned in 4:5. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **until he would come** with a phrase that more clearly refers to Jesus' "second coming." Alternate translation: "until he would come again" or "until he would return" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he would come

Here, **until he would come** identifies how long believers are supposed to **eat this bread and drink this cup**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **until he would come** by moving it earlier in the sentence to show what it modifies. Alternate translation: "For until the Lord comes, as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord" (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)



## 1 Corinthians 11:27

### might eat the bread or might drink the cup of the Lord

Here, **of the Lord** modifies both the **cup** and the **bread**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could include a possessive form with **bread** as well as with **cup**. Alternate translation: “might eat the Lord’s bread or might drink his cup” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### the cup

Here the Corinthians would have understood **cup** to refer to the drink inside the **cup**, which in Paul’s culture would have been wine. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **cup** by more explicitly referring to what would be in the **cup**. Alternate translation: “what is in the cup” or “the wine” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

### in an unworthy manner

Here, **in an unworthy manner** identifies behavior that is **unworthy** or “improper” for those who are participating in the Lord’s Supper. Paul has identified examples of this kind of behavior in [11:18–22](#). This phrase does not refer to people who are **unworthy**. Rather it refers to behavior that is **unworthy**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in an unworthy manner** with a phrase that identifies inappropriate or improper behavior in a specific context. Alternate translation: “while acting inappropriately” or “without respecting the Lord and fellow believers” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord

Here, **guilty of** could introduce: (1) what the person is **guilty of** doing. Here, that could be “profaning” or “dishonoring” the **body and the blood of the Lord**, or it could be participating in killing **the Lord**, which his **body** and **blood** signifies. Alternate translation: “guilty of dishonoring the body and the blood of the Lord” or “guilty of spilling the Lord’s blood and piercing his body” (2) whom the person has wronged. Here, that would be **the Lord** himself, particularly as he offered his **body** and **blood**. Alternate translation: “guilty of sinning against the Lord in his body and blood” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:28

**But let a man examine himself, and in this way let him eat from the bread, and let him drink from the cup**

In this verse, Paul uses three third-person imperatives. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use them here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the ideas using a word such as “must” or “should.” Alternate translation: “But a man must examine himself, and in this way he should eat from the bread, and he should drink from the cup” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

**a man & himself, & let him eat & let him drink**

Here, **a man**, **himself**, and **him** are written in masculine form, but they refer to anyone, no matter which their gender might be. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind these words by using word that do not have gender, or you could use both genders. Alternate translation: “a person ... himself or herself ... let him or her eat ... let him or her drink” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

**in this way let him eat from the bread, and let him drink from the cup**

Here, **in this way** introduces both **let him eat** and **let him drink**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine **let him drink** and the earlier command, or you could repeat **in this way**. Alternate translation: “in this way let him eat from the bread and drink from the cup” or “in this way let him eat from the bread, and in this way let him drink from the cup” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

**let him eat from the bread**

Here, to **eat from** something means to **eat** some of that thing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **eat from** with a word or phrase that refers to eating part of something. Alternate translation: “let him eat his portion of the bread” or “let him eat some of the loaf of bread” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:29

### without discerning the body

Here, **body** could refer to: (1) the “church,” which is **the body** of Christ (for a similar use of **body**, see [12:27](#)). The point would be that people are behaving during the Lord’s Supper in a way that does not respect fellow believers, who are **the body** of Christ. Alternate translation: “without discerning that fellow believers are the body” (2) the presence of **the body** of Christ in the Lord’s Supper itself. The point would be that believers are participating in the Lord’s Supper in a way that does not respect how Christ’s **body** is present in the bread and wine. Alternate translation: “without discerning the presence of the Lord’s body” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### eats and drinks judgment to himself

Here Paul speaks as if people could “eat and drink” **judgment**. By speaking this way, Paul means that the result of their “eating and drinking” is not physical or spiritual nourishment but **judgment**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “is judged as a result of eating and drinking” or “eats and drinks with the result that he receives judgment” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### judgment to himself

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **judgment**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “judge.” Paul implies that “God” is the one who is doing the “judging.” Alternate translation: “with the result that God judges him” or “the fact that God will judge him” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### to himself

Here, **himself** is written in masculine form, but it refers to anyone, no matter what their gender might be. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **himself** by using a word that does not have gender, or you could use both genders. Alternate translation: “to himself or herself” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:30

### are} weak and sick

Here, **weak** refers in general to lack of physical strength without specifying a cause. On the other hand, **sick** refers specifically to lack of strength caused by sickness or illness. If your language has words that fit with these distinctions, you could use them here. If your language does not have words that fit with these distinctions, you can use one general word for weakness or illness. Alternate translation: “are weak” or “are sick” (See: **Doublet (p. 676)**)

### are fallen asleep

Paul is referring to the deaths of **many of you** as having **fallen asleep**. This is a polite way of referring to something unpleasant. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **fallen asleep** with a different polite way of referring to deaths, or you could state the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “have passed away” or “are dead” (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:31

### But if we were examining ourselves

Here Paul is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he is already convinced that the condition is not true. He has already stated in the last verse that the Corinthians are being **judged**, which means that **we** are indeed **judged**. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: "But were we to actually examine ourselves" (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

### we were examining ourselves

Here Paul is speaking about **examining ourselves** in the context of the Lord's Supper, as the similarity of this statement to [11:28](#) shows. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state explicitly that Paul is still speaking about **examining** in the context of the Lord's Supper. Alternate translation: "we were examining ourselves at the Lord's Supper" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### we would not be judged

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **judged** rather than focusing on the person doing the "judging." Alternate translation: "God would not judge us" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:32

### being judged by the Lord

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the person **being judged** instead of focusing on **the Lord**. Alternate translation: “the Lord judging us” or “when the Lord judges us” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### being judged by the Lord, we are disciplined

Here, **being judged** and **we are disciplined** happen at the same time. The phrase **we are disciplined** gives the function or purpose of **being judged**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express how these two phrases relate by stating their relationship explicitly. Alternate translation: “when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined” or “being judged by the Lord is how we are disciplined” (See: **Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship (p.660)**)

### we are disciplined so that we might not be condemned

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on **we** instead of focusing on the person doing the actions. However, if you must state who does the actions, Paul implies that “God” or **the Lord** does them. Alternate translation: “he disciplines us so that he does not condemn us” or “he disciplines us so that God does not condemn us” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### the world

Here Paul uses **world** to refer primarily to the humans that are part of the **world**, those who do not believe in Christ. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of this word by translating **world** with a word or phrase that refers to people who do not believe in Christ, or you could use a phrase like “people of the world.” Alternate translation: “the people of the world” (See: **Synecdoche (p.773)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:33

### brothers

Although **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “brothers and sisters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### coming together to eat

Here, **coming together to eat** is the situation in which the Corinthians are to **wait for one another**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the relationship between these statements by clarifying that **coming together to eat** is the context in which they should **wait for one another**. Alternate translation: “whenever you come together to eat” or “at the time you come together to eat” (See: **Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship (p.660)**)

### coming together to eat

Here Paul implies that they are eating the Lord’s Supper. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this implication explicitly. Alternate translation: “coming together to participate in the Lord’s Supper” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### wait for one another

Here you should follow the interpretation of “each one takes his own supper first” that you chose in [11:21](#). To **wait for one another** could be a command to: (1) avoid receiving food before others. This could prohibit people from receiving food that was specially prepared for them ahead of time in proportion to their social status. Or, it could prohibit the people who were served first from eating more than their fair share and using up all the food before others were served. Alternate translation: “eat the same food as everyone else” or “wait to eat until everyone has been served” (2) show hospitality to other believers by not devouring one’s own food and instead sharing with others. Alternate translation: “show hospitality to one another” or “share with one another” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 11:34

### If

Here Paul uses **If** to introduce a true possibility. He means that someone might be **hungry**, or someone might not. He specifies the result for **If anyone is hungry**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **If** statement by introducing it with a word such as “whenever.” Alternate translation: “Whenever” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### If anyone is hungry

Here, being **hungry** indicates one of the reasons why the Corinthians are acting improperly during the Lord's Supper. They could be **hungry** enough that they are not waiting for everyone to receive food, or they could be **hungry** for specific kinds of food that were prepared specially for them and not for others. Make sure your translation matches how you translated 11:21 and 33. Alternate translation: “If anyone is so hungry that they cannot wait” or “If anyone desires specially prepared food” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### let him eat at home

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “must” or “should.” Alternate translation: “he must eat at home” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### let him eat

Although **him** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **him** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “let him or her eat” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### for judgment

Here, **for judgment** indicates what will happen if the Corinthians do not obey Paul's instruction to **eat at home**. It does not indicate why the Corinthians are “coming together.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **for judgment** with a word or phrase that more clearly introduces a result. Alternate translation: “with judgment as the result” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### for judgment

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **judgment**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “judge.” Paul implies that “God” is the one who is doing the “judging.” Alternate translation: “with the result that God judges you” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### about} the remaining things

Here Paul does not clarify what **the remaining things** are, and it is best to leave the reference unclear. Use a form that could be interpreted in the following ways. The phrase could refer to: (1) everything else Paul wishes to say about the Lord's Supper. (2) Paul's responses to other things that the Corinthians asked him about. (3) other instructions about worship practices. (See: **When to Keep Information Implicit (p.787)**)



## I will give directions

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **directions**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “direct” or “instruct.” Alternate translation: “I will direct you” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## when I come

Here Paul is speaking about his plan to visit the Corinthians at some point. The language that he uses indicates that he does not yet have a plan for how and when he will visit. What he is saying is that he does plan to visit them at some point. Use a form in your language that indicates future travel plans. Alternate translation: “whenever I can next visit you” (See: **Go and Come (p.694)**)

# 1 Corinthians 12

## 1 Corinthians 12 General Notes

### Structure and Formatting

On spiritual gifts (12:1–14:40)

- God is the source of every gift (12:1–11)
- The body (12:12–26)
- Diversity of gifts (12:27–31)

Some translations put the second half of [12:31](#) with the next section. The short sentence is a transition sentence, so it could end the current section or begin a new section. Consider how translations that your readers might be familiar with treat this verse.

## Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

### Spiritual gifts

In [12:1](#), Paul introduces “spiritual gifts.” This phrase refers to specific ways in which the Holy Spirit has empowered specific believers to do specific things. The examples that Paul uses in this chapter include things that we might consider to be amazing or “supernatural,” such as speaking in tongues or healing others, and things that we might consider to be everyday or “normal,” including “helps” and “administration.” Make sure to use a word or phrase that could include both kinds of things in the category of “spiritual gifts.” Paul implies that the Holy Spirit empowers all believers with “gifts,” but this does not necessarily mean that each believer receives only one “gift” for his or her entire life. The “gifts” are ways that the Holy Spirit empowers believers, not things that believers themselves possess. Avoid language that implies that each believer possesses one specific gift for their whole life. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/spirit\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/gift\]\]](#))

### Speaking in tongues

Three times in this chapter, Paul refers to speaking in “tongues” (See: [12:10](#), [28](#), [30](#)). He will develop this theme with much more detail in chapter 14, so you may want to look ahead at chapter 14 before you decide how to translate the expressions that refer to speaking in “tongues.” The “tongues” could refer to: (1) an otherwise unknown language that one person speaks to God. (2) the language or languages spoken by angels. (3) foreign languages that believers in the church do not speak. Of course, it could refer to any or all of these languages. Since Paul’s words are not very specific, you may also want to use relatively generic terms that refer to “unknown languages” or “special languages.” (See: [tongue, language \(p.813\)](#))

### Ranking of gifts?

In [12:31](#), Paul refers to “greater gifts.” Further, in [12:28](#), he numbers the first three items in his list: “first apostles, second prophets, third teachers.” These two verses could suggest that some “gifts” are more valuable or have more importance than other gifts. However, in [12:22–25](#), Paul argues that the “weaker,” “less honorable,” and “unpresentable” body parts are essential, honorable, and full of dignity. This seems to suggest that none of the “gifts” are more valuable or important than others. Consider the implications of how you translate especially [12:28](#), [31](#) for this issue. See the notes on those verses for translation options that fit with each view about the ranking of gifts.

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Body analogy and metaphor

In 12:12–27, Paul speaks about a “body.” He directly speaks about the human body, but he wants the Corinthians to apply what he says about a human body to their own group of believers. He uses the human body as an analogy for the group of believers because he identifies them as “the body of Christ” (12:27). He uses this metaphor because he wants them to realize that they are so closely connected to each other and to Christ that they are like one body. Because he uses this metaphor about the “body of Christ,” he also uses the human body as an analogy to understand the “body of Christ.” In the human body, there are different body parts, and each one has a specific function. Despite that, they all work together. Paul wants each of the Corinthians to think about himself or herself as a body part that works with all the other body parts to function together as a body, the “body of Christ.” Paul speaks mostly about the human “body” throughout, and your translation should reflect that. The notes point out specific figures of speech, but much of this section is description of how human body parts work together. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/body\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/other/member\]\]](#))

### Personification of body parts

In 12:15–16, 21, Paul develops quotes of what body parts might say if they could speak. In 12:25–26, he speaks as if body parts could care for, suffer with, and rejoice with each other. So that he can make a point, he speaks as if the body parts were people. However, he also wants the Corinthians to identify themselves with the body parts in the analogy, so personifying them helps the Corinthians see themselves as “body parts.” If possible, preserve this figure of speech so that your readers can identify themselves as body parts. If you must express the idea in some other way, you could indicate that Paul is using a hypothetical situation or telling a story. (See: **Personification (p. 748)**)

### Rhetorical questions

In 12:17, 19, 29–30, Paul uses rhetorical questions. He is not asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to provide him with information. Rather, he is asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to think about how they are acting and what they are thinking. The questions encourage them to think along with Paul. For ways to translate these questions, look for the notes on each verse that includes these kinds of questions. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Non-exhaustive lists

In 12:8–10, 28, 29–30, Paul provides three different lists of “spiritual gifts.” Each of these lists contain some of the same items that the others contain, but none of them contain all of the same items. This shows that Paul did not intend these lists to identify every spiritual gift that might exist. Instead, Paul is listing particular gifts as examples. Make sure that your translation does not imply that the gifts that Paul lists are the only ones that exist.

### “Members”

Throughout 12:12–27, Paul refers to “members,” which identifies any of the human body parts. In English, “members” has other meanings besides parts of the body, which is why the UST translates it as “body parts.” In your translation, make sure to use a word that refers specifically to parts of the body, including external limbs (such as arms, legs, and toes) and internal organs (such as heart, lungs, and stomach). If you must choose a word that identifies only external or internal body parts, it is better to refer to external body parts because Paul refers specifically to head, ears, eyes, hands, and feet. (See: **member, body parts (p.806)**)

## Names for the Holy Spirit

Paul refers to the Holy Spirit as “the Spirit of God” (12:3), as “the Holy Spirit” (12:3), as “one Spirit” (12:13), and as “the Spirit” (12:4, 7–9, 11). All these phrases refer to the Holy Spirit. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate that these phrases all refer to the same Spirit by stating that in some specific way or by using “Holy Spirit” in all these verses. (See: [\[\[rc://tw/dict/bible/kt/holyspirit\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc://ta/man/translate/translate-names\]\]](#))

## 1 Corinthians 12:1

### Now about the spiritual gifts

### Connecting Statement:

Just as in 8:1, **Now about** introduces a new topic that Paul wishes to address. Likely, the topics that he introduces in this way are those about which the Corinthians wrote to him. Translate **Now about** here as you translated it in 8:1. Alternate translation: “Next, about” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### the spiritual gifts

### Connecting Statement:

Here, **spiritual gifts** refers to how the Holy Spirit enables specific believers to do specific things. Paul gives a list of some of these **spiritual gifts** in 12:8–10. These **gifts** should not be understood as “abilities” that the believer naturally has. Rather, the **gifts** are ways in which the Holy Spirit works through a specific person to do specific things that not everyone else can do. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **spiritual gifts** with a different word or phrase that gets this idea across while maintaining some reference to the Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: “abilities given by the Holy Spirit” or “ways that the Holy Spirit equips believers” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### brothers

### Connecting Statement:

Although **brothers** is in masculine form, Paul is using it to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “brothers and sisters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### I do not want you to be ignorant

Here Paul uses a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that has a meaning opposite to that of the intended meaning. If this is confusing in your language, you can express the meaning positively. Alternate translation: “I want you to have knowledge” or “I want you to be very knowledgeable” (See: **Litotes (p.724)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:2

### you were led astray to the mute idols, in whatever ways you were led

Here, **led astray** and **led** refer to how one person can “lead” another person to a specific place. Paul uses this figure of speech here because he wants the Corinthians to think about how they used to worship idols as if somebody were “leading” them **astray** or away from the correct path. This figure of speech emphasizes that the Corinthians were going the wrong way and that someone or something was directing them to go that way. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “you wrongly followed mute idols, in whatever ways you followed them” or “you were urged to worship mute idols, in whatever ways you were urged to do so” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### you were led astray to the mute idols, in whatever ways you were led

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to avoid identifying who did the “leading astray,” because he wishes to keep it general. If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that “other pagans” or “something” did it. Alternate translation: “others led you astray to mute idols, in whatever ways they led you” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### the mute idols

Here, **mute** means that the **idols** cannot speak to those who worship them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **mute** with a word or phrase to describe the **idols** as unable to speak. Alternate translation: “idols who cannot communicate” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### in whatever ways you were led

Here Paul intentionally uses vague language that does not define the **ways you were led**. In your translation, use a word or phrase that similarly does not tightly define what the **ways** are. Alternate translation: “however you were led” (See: **When to Keep Information Implicit (p.787)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:3

### Therefore

Here, **Therefore** could draw a conclusion from: (1) [12:1-2](#). The Corinthians “know” about how pagan worship worked (verse 2), but Paul wants to tell them more about how Christian worship works (verse 1). **Therefore**, he will make this **known** to them. Alternate translation: “Because you know less about Christian worship” (2) just [12:2](#). The Corinthians were accustomed to how “inspired speech” or **speaking** by the power of a god worked when they “were pagans.” Now, Paul wants to tell them about how it works by the power of the Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: “Now, however” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### the Spirit of God & the Holy Spirit

Here, **Spirit of God** and **Holy Spirit** are two different names for the same person: the Holy Spirit. If your language uses only one name for the Holy Spirit, and if your readers would think that two different persons are identified in this verse, you could use the same name in both places in this verse. Alternate translation: “the Holy Spirit ... the Holy Spirit” or “the Spirit of God ... the Spirit of God” (See: **How to Translate Names (p.699)**)

### speaking by the Spirit of God & by the Holy Spirit

Here, **speaking by the Spirit of God** refers to words that the **Spirit of God** has enabled someone to say. This could be more formal, such as in prophecy or preaching, or it could be less formal, referring to everyday speech. Paul does not specify exactly what he has in mind since the Corinthians would have understood what he implied. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind what **speaking by the Spirit of God** means in a way that more clearly refers to the **Spirit** empowering someone to “speak.” Alternate translation: “speaking as the Spirit of God leads them ... as the Holy Spirit leads them” or “speaking in the power of the Spirit of God ... in the power of the Holy Spirit” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### says, “Jesus {is} accursed,” & to say, “Jesus {is} Lord

If your language does not use this form to refer to what someone says, you can translate the statements as indirect quotes instead of as direct quotes. Alternate translation: “says that Jesus is accursed ... to say that Jesus is Lord” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

### Jesus {is} accursed

This phrase identifies any words that someone might use to “curse” **Jesus**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Jesus {is} accursed** with a form that indicates any kind of “curse” against someone. Alternate translation: “Cursed be Jesus” or “I curse Jesus” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### no one is able to say, “Jesus {is} Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit

If it would appear in your language that Paul was making a statement here and then contradicting it, you could reword this to avoid using an exception clause. Alternate translation: “and only by the Holy Spirit is one able to say, ‘Jesus is Lord’” (See: **Connect — Exception Clauses (p.646)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:4

### varieties of gifts

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **varieties**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as “various” or “different.” Alternate translation: “various gifts” or “different gifts” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### the same Spirit

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul implies that it is **the same Spirit** who gives the **varieties of gifts**. If your readers would not infer that information, and if your language requires these words to make a complete thought, you could supply them. Alternate translation: “the same Spirit gives them all” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)



## 1 Corinthians 12:5

### varieties of ministries

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **varieties**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as “various” or “different.” Alternate translation: “various ministries” or “different ministries” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### of ministries

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **ministries**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “serve” or “minister.” Alternate translation: “of ways to minister” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### the same Lord

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul implies that it is **the same Lord** whom people serve with the **varieties of ministries**. If your readers would not infer that information, and if your language requires these words to make a complete thought, you could supply them. Alternate translation: “all of them minister for the same Lord” or “everyone serves the same Lord” (See: **Ellipsis (p. 678)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:6

### varieties of workings

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **varieties**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as “various” or “different.” Alternate translation: “various workings” or “different workings” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### of workings

Here, **workings** refers to “activities” or “actions,” that is, doing things. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **workings** with a word or phrase that refers generally to “doing things.” Alternate translation: “of activities” or “of ways to do things” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### the same God

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul implies that it is **the same God** who empowers the **varieties of workings**. If your readers would not infer that information, and if your language requires these words to make a complete thought, you could supply them. Alternate translation: “it is the same God” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### all things in everyone

Here, **all things in everyone** could refer: (1) specifically to **all** gifts, ministries, and workings that God is **working** in **everyone** who believes. Alternate translation: “each of these things in each person” (2) generally to how God is **working all things** in “everything and everyone.” Alternate translation: “everything in everyone” or “all things in every situation” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:7

### to each one is given

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses this form to focus on the gifts rather than focusing on the one who gives them. If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that “God” did it (See: [12:6](#)). Alternate translation: “to each one God gives” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### the outward display of the Spirit

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **display**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “display” or “manifest.” Alternate translation: “how they display the Spirit” or “how they manifest the power of the Spirit” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### the outward display of the Spirit

Here Paul uses the possessive form to indicate how **the Spirit** is revealed by **the outward display**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind that **the outward display** is a revelation of **the Spirit** with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: “the ability to outwardly display the Spirit” or “a way to outwardly display the Spirit” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### for the collective benefit

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **benefit**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “benefit” or “help.” Alternate translation: “in order to benefit everyone” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:8

### to one is given by the Spirit

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses this form to emphasize what **is given** over who gives it. If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that “God” or **the Spirit** did it. Alternate translation: “the Spirit gives to one” or “God gives to one through the Spirit” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### to one & to another

While Paul specifically refers to **one** and to **another**, he is not speaking about just two people. Rather, he is using this form to give two examples. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that Paul is using two examples here with a form in your language that does indicate representative examples, or you could use plural forms here. Alternate translation: “to certain people ... to other people” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### a word & a word

Here, **word** represents what someone says in words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **word** with an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: “a message ... a message” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

### a word of wisdom

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **wisdom**, you can express the idea in another way. Paul could mean that: (1) the **word** is characterized by **wisdom**. Alternate translation: “a wise word” (2) the **word** gives **wisdom** to those who hear it. Alternate translation: “a word that makes others wise” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### to another, a word

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them explicitly in the previous clause (**is given**). If your language does need these words, you could supply them from that clause. Alternate translation: “to another is given a word” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### a word of knowledge

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **knowledge**, you can express the idea in another way. Paul could mean that: (1) the **word** is characterized by **knowledge**. Alternate translation: “an enlightened word” (2) the **word** gives **knowledge** to those who hear it. Alternate translation: “a word that makes others knowledgeable” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:9

### to another

Here Paul uses a different word for **another** than he does in the previous verse or the rest of this verse. It is possible that Paul uses this different word to indicate that he is beginning a new section in the list. If you are breaking the list into sections, you could begin a new section here. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a period before it. Alternate translation: "To another person"

### to another, & to another

In both parts of this verse, Paul specifically refers to **another**. When he does this, he is not speaking about just one person. Rather, he is using this form to give an example. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that Paul is giving examples here with a form in your language that does indicate representative examples, or you could use plural forms here. Alternate translation: "to other people ... to other people" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### to another, faith & to another, gifts

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them explicitly at the beginning of 12:8 ("is given"). If your language does need these words, you could supply them from that clause. Alternate translation: "to another is given faith ... to another are given gifts" (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### faith

Here, **faith** refers to a special belief in God. It does not refer to the **faith** that all believers have. This special **faith** could be the belief in God that is required to do miracles, or it could be the ability to help others believe more, or it could be something else. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express more explicitly that **faith** by itself is a special kind of **faith**. Alternate translation: "special faith" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### faith

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **faith**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "believe" or "trust." Alternate translation: "the ability to believe" or "how they believe" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### the one Spirit

Here, **the one Spirit** means basically the same thing as **the same Spirit**. Paul uses a different phrase because changing a repeated phrase was sometimes considered good style in his culture. If it would not be good style to state **the same Spirit** with different words in your language, and if your readers would be confused about why Paul changes his words, you could use **the same Spirit** here instead of **that one Spirit**. Alternate translation: "the same Spirit"

## 1 Corinthians 12:10

### to another, & to another, & to another, & to another, & to another

Throughout this verse, Paul specifically refers to **another**. When he does this, he is not speaking about just one person. Rather, he is using this form to give an example. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that Paul is giving examples here with a form in your language that does indicate representative examples, or you could use plural forms here. Alternate translation: “to other people ... to other people ... to other people ... to other people ... to other people” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### and to another, workings of power; to another, prophecy; to another, discernments of spirits; to another, kinds of tongues; and to another, interpretation of tongues

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them explicitly at the beginning of 12:8 (“is given”). If your language does need these words, you could supply them from that clause. Alternate translation: “and to another are given workings of power; to another is given prophecy; to another are given discernments of spirits; to another are given kinds of tongues; and to another is given the interpretation of tongues” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### workings of power

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **workings** or **power**, you can express the ideas by using a verb and adverbs. Alternate translation: “how they powerfully work” or “what they powerfully do” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### workings of power

Here Paul uses the possessive form to speak about **workings** that are characterized by **power**. This could mean: (1) that the person can “work” things that are “powerful.” Alternate translation: “doing powerful deeds” or “doing miracles” (2) that the **workings** exhibit or show **power**. Alternate translation: “powerful workings” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### prophecy

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **prophecy**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “prophesy.” Alternate translation: “how they prophesy” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### discernments of spirits

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **discernments**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “discern.” Alternate translation: “how they discern spirits” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### discernments

Here, **discernments** could refer to: (1) the ability to make decisions about **spirits**. Alternate translation: “judging” (2) the ability to evaluate or identify **spirits**. Alternate translation: “evaluation” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## of spirits

Here, **spirits** could refer to: (1) speech or deeds empowered by **spirits** or the “Spirit.” In this case, those with this “gift” can “discern” whether speech and deeds come from God’s Spirit or not. Alternate translation: “concerning spiritual things” (2) spiritual beings themselves. In this case, those with this “gift” can “discern” whether **spirits** represent God or not. Alternate translation: “between spirits” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## to another

Here Paul uses a different word for **another** than he does in the previous two verses or in the rest of this verse, except for the one case noted in the last verse. It is possible that Paul uses this different word to indicate that he is beginning a new section in the list. If you are breaking the list up into sections, you could begin a new section here. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a period before it. Alternate translation: “To another person”

## of tongues; & of tongues

Here, **tongues** refers to something that one does with one’s “tongue,” which is speaking a language. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate that **tongues** is a way of speaking about “languages” by using a comparable term or expressing the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “of languages ... of languages” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

## kinds of tongues

Here, **kinds of tongues** identifies words spoken in languages that the believers could not normally understand. The **tongues** could refer to any or all of the following languages: (1) an otherwise unknown language that one person speaks to God. Alternate translation: “ecstatic speech” or “various private languages” (2) the language or languages spoken by angels. Alternate translation: “various angelic languages” (3) foreign languages that the specific believers in the church do not speak. Alternate translation: “various foreign languages” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## interpretation of tongues

Here, the **interpretation** could refer to: (1) translation of the **tongues** into a language that the believers understand. Alternate translation: “the translation of tongues” (2) understanding and then explaining the meaning of what was spoken in **tongues**. Alternate translation: “the explanation of tongues” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## interpretation of tongues

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **interpretation**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “interpret.” Alternate translation: “how they interpret tongues” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:11

### the one and the same Spirit

Here, **one and the same** emphasizes that there is only **one** Holy Spirit and that each gift is given by the **same** Holy Spirit, not by a different spirit. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **one and the same** with a comparable phrase that identifies the Holy Spirit as the only one who gives all the gifts. Alternate translation: “there is only one Holy Spirit, who” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### individually

Here, **individually** refers to how the Spirit “distributes” the gifts to specific individuals. In other words, different people receive different gifts. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **individually** with a word or phrase that identifies people on their own, apart from the communities they participate in. Alternate translation: “by himself or herself” or “separately” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### just as he desires

Here, **just as he desires** means that the **Spirit** “distributes” the gifts as he decides, not because of any other factors. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **desires** with a word that refers to what the **Spirit** “decides” or “chooses.” Alternate translation: “in the way that he chooses” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)



## 1 Corinthians 12:12

### the body

### Connecting Statement:

Here Paul is speaking of “bodies” in general, not of one particular **body**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to “bodies” in general. Alternate translation: “a human body, for example,” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### is one

### Connecting Statement:

Here, **one** refers to how the **body** is a single entity. In other words, we can count **one** body as **one** thing, even though it is made up of many parts. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **one** with a word or phrase that emphasizes the unity of the **body**. Alternate translation: “is united” or “is a unity” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### being many

### Connecting Statement:

Here, **being many** contrasts with the words that follow: **are one body**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could introduce **being many** with a word or phrase that explicitly indicates a contrast. Alternate translation: “although they are many” or “despite being many” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### even as & so also {is} Christ

### Connecting Statement:

Here Paul does not explain how **Christ** is like **the body** he describes in this verse. Instead, he slowly explains how **Christ** is like **the body** throughout the following verses. In [12:27](#), he fully explains what he means: “you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.” Because Paul goes on to explain what **so also {is} Christ** means in the next verses, you should express this phrase by emphasizing the comparison between **the body** and **Christ** but without giving any more detail. Alternate translation: “just as ... Christ too is like this” (See: **When to Keep Information Implicit (p.787)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:13

### by one Spirit

Here, **by one Spirit** could refer to: (1) the person in whom **we were all baptized**. In other words, the baptism happens by the power of the **one Spirit** or leads to the reception of the **one Spirit**. Alternate translation: “in one Spirit” or “into one Spirit” (2) the one who performs the “baptism.” Alternate translation: “by the work of the one Spirit”

### by one Spirit we were all baptized

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Here, the one who does the “baptizing” could be: (1) the believer who performs a water baptism by means of the Spirit’s power. Alternate translation: “fellow believers baptized all of us by the power of the Spirit” (2) God, who gives the **one Spirit** to believers during a water baptism or in a way that is like a “baptism.” Alternate translation: “God baptized all of us in one Spirit” or “it was as if God baptized us by giving us the one Spirit, which means that he united us” (3) the **one Spirit**, who empowers the water baptism or unites us in a way similar to a baptism. Alternate translation: “the one Spirit baptized all of us” or “it was as if the one Spirit baptized us, which means that he united us” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### were all baptized

Here, **baptized** could refer to: (1) water baptism, which is connected to the **Spirit**. Alternate translation: “were all baptized in water” (2) becoming a believer and receiving the **Spirit**, which is like being **baptized**. Alternate translation: “were all incorporated by something like baptism” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### were all baptized into one body

Here, being **baptized into** something or someone identifies with whom one is being united in baptism. In this case, believers are united together as **one body** when they are **baptized**. Alternate translation: “were all baptized so that we became one body” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### into one body

Here Paul speaks as if believers together were **one body**. By speaking in this way, he emphasizes the unity that believers have because they together have the **Spirit** as the **body** of Christ. Paul uses this metaphor throughout the following verses, and it is an important metaphor for 1 Corinthians and for Christian teaching. Because of this, you should preserve this metaphor or, if you must express the idea differently, use an analogy. Alternate translation: “into close union, as if we were one body” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### εἴτε & δοῦλοι, εἴτε ἐλεύθεροι

Alternate translation: “whether slaves or freedmen”

### all were made to drink one Spirit

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses this form to emphasize the people who are drinking rather than

emphasizing the one who provides the drink. If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that “God” did it. Alternate translation: “God made us all drink one Spirit” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## **all were made to drink one Spirit**

Here Paul speaks as if receiving the **Spirit** or being empowered by the **Spirit** is “drinking” the **Spirit**. It is possible that he speaks in this way to make the Corinthians think about the Lord’s Supper (“drinking the cup”), especially since the beginning of the verse speaks of being **baptized**. The main point is that all those who **drink** the **one Spirit** are united together by that drinking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this metaphor with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “all received one Spirit” or “all partook of the one Spirit” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:14

### the body

Here Paul is speaking of “bodies” in general, not of one particular **body**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to “bodies” in general. Alternate translation: “any body” (See:

**Generic Noun Phrases (p.692))**

## 1 Corinthians 12:15

### If the foot would say, “Since I am not a hand, I am not of the body

Here Paul is using a hypothetical situation to teach the Corinthians. He wants them to imagine that a **foot** could talk and claim that it is not **of the body** because it is not **a hand**. He uses this hypothetical situation because it is absurd for a **foot** to talk, and it is even more absurd that a **foot** would say these things if it could talk. Use a natural way in your language to introduce a hypothetical situation. Alternate translation: “Suppose a foot would say, ‘Since I am not a hand, I am not of the body’” (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.707)**)

### the foot

Paul is using any **foot** as an example. He is not speaking about one particular **foot** that can talk. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to any **foot**. Alternate translation: “a foot” or “any foot” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### If the foot would say

Here Paul speaks as if a **foot** could **say** things. He speaks in this way because he wants the Corinthians to think of themselves as body parts making up the body of Christ, and so **the foot** is an example for them. He also wishes them to see how absurd it is for a **foot** to say what it says here. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech by clarifying that this is a hypothetical situation in which a **foot** can say things. Alternate translation: “Say that a foot could talk, and it said” (See: **Personification (p.748)**)

### would say, “Since I am not a hand, I am not of the body

If your language does not use this form, you can translate the statement as an indirect quote instead of as a direct quote. Alternate translation: “would say that, since it is not a hand, it is not of the body” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

### I am not of the body,” & it is not of the body

Here, **of the body** identifies something that belongs to or is part of **the body**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **of the body** with a form in your language that refers to what is part of or belongs to something else. Alternate translation: “I am not a part of the body ... it is not a part of the body” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### not for this it is not of the body

Here Paul uses two negative words to express the idea that the reason that the **foot** gives is not valid for separating it from **the body**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the two negative words with positive words or only one negative word. Alternate translation: “despite that, it is of the body” or “it is still of the body” (See: **Double Negatives (p.673)**)

### this

Here, **this** refers back to what the **foot** said about not being a hand. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **this** with a word or phrase that more clearly identifies what it refers to. Alternate translation: “this reasoning” or “that idea” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:16

### if the ear would say, “Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body

Just as in 12:15, here Paul is using a hypothetical situation to teach the Corinthians. He wants them to imagine that an **ear** could talk and claim that it is not **of the body** because it is not an **eye**. He uses this hypothetical situation because it is absurd for an **ear** to talk, and it is even more absurd that an **ear** would say these things if it could talk. Use a natural way in your language to introduce a hypothetical situation. Alternate translation: “suppose an ear would say, ‘Since I am not an eye, I am not of the body’” (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.707)**)

### the ear

Paul is using any **ear** as an example. He is not speaking about one particular **ear** that can talk. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to any **ear**. Alternate translation: “an ear” or “any ear” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### if the ear would say

Just as in 12:15, here Paul speaks as if an **ear** could say things. He speaks in this way because he wants the Corinthians to think of themselves as body parts of the body of Christ, and so **the ear** is an example for them. He also wishes them to see how absurd it is for an **ear** to say what it says here. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech by clarifying that this is a hypothetical situation in which a foot can say things. Alternate translation: “say that an ear could talk, and it said” (See: **Personification (p.748)**)

### would say, “Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body

If your language does not use this form, you can translate the statement as an indirect quote instead of as a direct quote. Alternate translation: “would say that, since it is not an eye, it is not of the body” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

### I am not of the body,” & it is not of the body

Just as in 12:15, **of the body** identifies something that belong to or is part of **the body**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **of the body** with a form in your language that refers to what is part of or belongs to something else. Alternate translation: “I am not a part of the body ... it is not a part of the body” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### not for this it is not of the body

Here Paul uses two negative words to express the idea that the reason that **the ear** gives is not valid for separating it from **the body**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the two negative words with positive words or only one negative word. Alternate translation: “despite that, it is of the body” or “it is still of the body” (See: **Double Negatives (p.673)**)

### this

Here, **this** refers back to what **the ear** said about not being **an eye**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **this** with a word or phrase that more clearly identifies what it refers to. Alternate translation: “this reasoning” or “that idea” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:17

### If the whole body {were} an eye, where {would} the hearing {be}? If the whole {were} an ear, where {would} the sense of smell {be}

Here Paul is using two hypothetical situations to teach the Corinthians. He wants them to imagine that **the whole body** was **an eye** or **an ear**. He uses these hypothetical situations because it is absurd for **an eye** or **an ear** to make up **the whole body**. Use a natural way in your language to introduce hypothetical situations. Alternate translation: "Suppose the whole body were an eye; where would the hearing be? Suppose the whole were an ear; where would the sense of smell be?" (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.707)**)

### the whole body {& the whole

Here Paul is speaking of "bodies" in general, not of one particular **body**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to "bodies" in general. Alternate translation: "any whole body ... any whole" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### where {would} the hearing {be}? & where {would} the sense of smell {be}

Paul does not ask these questions because he is looking for information about **where** the senses of **hearing** and **smell** are. Rather, he asks them to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The questions assume that the answer is "nowhere." In other words, a **body** that is only **an eye** does not have **hearing**, and a **body** that is only an **ear** does not have **smell**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these questions by stating the ideas with strong negations. Alternate translation: "it would never hear anything. ... it would never smell anything." or "it would not have hearing. ... it would not have the sense of smell." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### the whole

Here Paul omits **body** because he stated it explicitly in the previous sentence. If your language needs to state **body** here, you could supply it from the previous sentence. Alternate translation: "the whole body" (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:18

### But now

Here, **But now** introduces what is true, in contrast to the hypothetical situations Paul offered in the last verse (12:17). Here, the word **now** does not refer to time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **But now** with a word or phrase that introduces reality in contrast to a hypothetical situation. Alternate translation: “In reality, though,” or “As it really is,” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### the members, each one of them, in

Here Paul interrupts his sentence to include **each one of them**. In Paul’s culture, this interruption emphasized **each one of them**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate why Paul interrupts his sentence by rearranging the phrases and expressing the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “each and every member in” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### just as he desired

Here, **just as he desired** means that the God **appointed the members** as he decided, and not because of any other factors. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **desired** with a word that refers to what God “decided” or “chose.” Alternate translation: “in the way that he chose” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)



## 1 Corinthians 12:19

### if they were all one member, where {would} & be

Here Paul is using a hypothetical situation to teach the Corinthians. He wants them to imagine that **all** the body parts were just **one member**, that is, one kind of body part. He uses this hypothetical situation because it is absurd for **all** body parts to be **one member**. Use a natural way in your language to introduce a hypothetical situation. Alternate translation: “suppose they were all one member; where” (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.707)**)

### one member

Here, **one member** refers to one kind of **member**. In other words, it does not indicate that there is only one body part (one arm, for example). Rather, it indicates that all the body parts are of one type (as if all the ears, legs, and other body parts were all arms). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **one member** by clarifying that Paul has in mind many members that are of one kind. Alternate translation: “one kind of member” or “one type of member” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### where {would} the body {be

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information about **where** the **body** is. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “nowhere.” In other words, a **body** that is made up of only **one member** is not a **body** at all. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negation. Alternate translation: “there would be no body!” or “the body would certainly not exist.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:20

### But now

Just as in 12:18, **But now** introduces what is true, in contrast with the hypothetical situations Paul offered in the last verse (12:19). The word **now** does not refer to time here. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **But now** with a word or phrase that introduces reality in contrast to a hypothetical situation. Alternate translation: “In reality, though,” or “As it really is,” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### there are} many members

Here, **many members** refers to many kinds of **member**. In other words, it does not indicate that there are many examples of one body part (many arms, for example). Rather, it indicates that there are many different types of **members** (ears, legs, and arms, for example). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **many members** by clarifying that Paul has in mind many different kinds of **members**. Alternate translation: “there are many types of members” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### but one body

Here Paul omits some words that your language might need to make a complete thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them explicitly in the previous clause (**there are**). If your language does need these words here, you could supply them from the previous clause. Alternate translation: “but there is one body” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:21

### the eye is not able & the head to the feet

Here Paul is using a hypothetical situation to teach the Corinthians. He wants them to imagine that an **eye** and a **head** could talk to other body parts. He uses this hypothetical situation because, if these body parts could talk, they would never say **"I have no need of you"** to other body parts. His point is that human body parts work together; they do not try to get rid of each other. Use a natural way in your language to introduce a hypothetical situation. Alternate translation: "suppose that the eye could speak. It is not able ... suppose that the head could speak. It is not able to say to the feet" (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.707)**)

### the eye is not able to say to the hand, "I do not have need of you," or again, the head to the feet, "I do not have need of you

Here Paul speaks as if an **eye** and a **head** could say things. He speaks in this way because he wants the Corinthians to think of themselves as body parts of the body of Christ, and so the **eye** and the **head** are examples for them. He also wishes them to see how absurd it would be if an **eye** or a **head** were to say that it did not need other body parts. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech by clarifying that this is a hypothetical situation in which an **eye** or a **head** can say things. Alternate translation: "say that an eye could talk. It is not able to say to the hand, 'I do not have need of you.' Or again, say that a head could talk. It is not able to say to the hand, 'I do not have need of you.'" (See: **Personification (p.748)**)

### to the hand, "I do not have need of you," & to the feet, "I do not have need of you

If your language does not use this form, you can translate the statement as an indirect quote instead of as a direct quote. Alternate translation: "that it does not need the hand ... that it does not need the feet" (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

### the eye is not able to say to the hand, "& the head to the feet

Paul is using these body parts as examples. He is not speaking about one particular **eye**, **hand**, **head**, or **feet**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to any ear. Alternate translation: "no eye is able to say to a hand ... no head is able to say to feet" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### I do not have need of you," & I do not have need of you

Here, **I do not have need of you** is a natural way to express this idea in Paul's language. In some languages, this clause sounds unnatural or longer than it needs to be. Paul is not using this form for special emphasis, so you could express the idea in whatever way seems natural in your language. Alternate translation: "I do not require you ... I do not require you" or "You are not needed ... You are not needed" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### or again

Here, **or again** introduces another example. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **or again** with a word or phrase that introduces another example. Alternate translation: "or, for another example," or "or further" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

## the head to the feet

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them explicitly in the previous clause (**is not able to say**). If your language does need these words, you could supply them from that clause. Alternate translation: “the head is not able to say to the feet” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:22

### **weaker**

Here, **weaker** refers to physical frailty or lack of strength. It is unclear which body parts he might have considered to be **weaker**. Use a similar general word that identifies frailty or weakness. Alternate translation: “frailer” or “less strong” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### **essential**

Here, **essential** identifies the **weaker** bodies parts as required for the body to function properly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **essential** with a word or phrase that identifies the body parts as “necessary” or “required.” Alternate translation: “required” or “indispensable” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### **to be weaker are much more essential**

Here Paul seems to be stating a general principle that the **weaker** a body part is, the **more** it ends up being **essential** for the body. He implies a comparison with other body parts, which are “stronger” but “less essential.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this general principle or what Paul is comparing more explicitly. Alternate translation: “to be weaker than other members are actually that much more essential than those other members” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:23

**and those of the body which we think to be less honorable, we bestow them greater honor; and our unpresentable members have more dignity**

Throughout this verse, Paul is most likely thinking about how we carefully wear clothing that covers our **less honorable** and **unpresentable** body parts. He does not specify which body parts these would be, but it is likely that he has genital organs in mind. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state explicitly that Paul has clothing in mind as the way we **bestow** some body parts with **greater honor** or give them **more dignity**. Alternate translation: “and those of the body which we think to be less honorable, we bestow them greater honor by clothing them; and our unpresentable members have more dignity because of the care we take to cover them” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

**those of the body which**

Here, **those** refers back to the “members” in 12:22. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **those** with “members” instead. Alternate translation: “the members of the body which” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

**those of the body which we think to be less honorable, we bestow them greater honor**

Here Paul identifies what he is talking about first (**those of the body which we think to be less honorable**) and then refers back to that phrase by using **them** in his sentence. If your readers would be confused by this structure, you could restructure the sentence and indicate what Paul is talking about in another way. Alternate translation: “we bestow greater honor on those of the body which we think to be less honorable” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

**we bestow them greater honor**

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **honor**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “honor” or an adverb such as “honorably.” Alternate translation: “we treat them honorably” or “we honor them more” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

**our unpresentable members**

Here, **unpresentable members** is a polite way to refer to sexual organs. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **unpresentable members** with a comparable polite term. Paul’s euphemism contrasts **unpresentable** with **dignity**. If possible, use a euphemism that similarly creates a contrast. Alternate translation: “our private parts” (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

**have more dignity**

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **dignity**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “dignify” or an adjective such as “presentable.” Alternate translation: “are more dignified” or “are more presentable” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:24

### our presentable members

Here, **presentable members** contrasts with the “unpresentable members” in [12:23](#). These **presentable members** are probably those body parts which we do not cover with clothing, but Paul does not specify exactly which body parts he is thinking about. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **presentable members** with a word or phrase that contrasts with how you translated “unpresentable members.” Alternate translation: “nonprivate parts” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### do not have need

Here Paul does not specify what they do not **need**. He implies that they do not need to be treated with “dignity,” as the “unpresentable parts” are (See: [12:23](#)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **do not have need** by referring back to how you translated what people do with their “unpresentable parts.” Alternate translation: “do not need to be treated with dignity” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### has combined the body together

Here Paul speaks as if God took many different things and **combined** them **together** to make **the body**. By speaking in this way, he emphasizes that the body is made up of many different parts, but that God has united or **combined** all these parts together. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **combined the body together** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “has assembled the body” or “has joined all the body parts into one body” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### the body

Here Paul is speaking of “bodies” in general, not of one particular **body**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to “bodies” in general. Alternate translation: “the human body” or “each body” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### giving more honor to the one lacking {it

Here Paul implies that the body parts that “lack” honor receive **more honor** from God. The Corinthians would have understood this clause to mean that God is the one who created the body, so that what Paul has already stated in [12:23–24](#) is true. God has made the body in such a way that we give more honor and dignity to the private and less honorable body parts. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this implication more plainly by including what humans think about the body parts. Alternate translation: “giving more honor to what we think has less honor” or “giving more honor to the body parts that we consider to be less honorable” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### giving more honor to the one lacking {it

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **honor**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “honor” or an adjective such as “honorable.” Alternate translation: “honoring more what is honored less” or “making honorable what is less honorable” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:25

### no division & but that

Here Paul uses a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that means the opposite of the intended meaning. If this is confusing in your language, you can express the meaning positively. If you do, you will need to express the contrast between the two halves of this verse as a connection. Alternate translation: “complete unity ... and that” (See: **Litotes (p.724)**)

### there may be no division within the body

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **division**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “divide” or “split.” Alternate translation: “the body may not divide itself” or “the body may not become divided” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### the members should care for one another

Here Paul speaks as if **the members** of a body could **care for another**. He speaks in this way because he wants the Corinthians to think of themselves as **members** of the body of Christ, and so **the members** of a human body are an example for them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with an analogy or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “the members should work together like they care for one another” or “the members should work with each other” (See: **Personification (p.748)**)

### the same

Here, **the same** means that **the members** are “caring” for each body part **the same** way they care for all the others. In other words, the body parts make no distinctions about honor or dignity. Instead, they treat each other **the same**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **the same** with a comparable phrase that emphasizes equality or similarity. Alternate translation: “equally” or “without distinctions” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)



## 1 Corinthians 12:26

### if one member suffers, & if a member is honored

Here Paul uses the conditional form to show the connection between **one member** and **all the members**. If the conditional form does not draw a close connection between what happens to **one** and what happens to **all**, you could use a different form that does draw a close connection. Alternate translation: “when one member suffers ... when a member is honored” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### if one member suffers, all the members suffer together

Here Paul speaks as if **one member** and indeed **all the members** of a body could **suffer**, which is a word that is normally used for people instead of things. He speaks in this way because he wants the Corinthians to think of themselves as **members** of the body of Christ, and so the **members** of a human body are an example for them. Here, he specifically has in mind the idea that an injury or infection in one body part (a finger, for example) has an effect on the entire body. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with an analogy or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “if one member feels pain, all the members also feel the pain” or “if one member is like a person who suffers, all the members also join in the suffering” (See: **Personification (p.748)**)

### a member is honored

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to avoid stating who is doing the “honoring.” If you must state who does it, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: “they honor a member” or “a member receives honor” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### all the members rejoice with {it

Here Paul speaks as if **all the members** of a body could **rejoice** like people do. He speaks in this way because he wants the Corinthians to think of themselves as **members** of the body of Christ, and so **the members** of a human body are an example for them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with an analogy or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “all the members are like people who rejoice together” or “all the members together receive the honor” (See: **Personification (p.748)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:27

### Now

Here, **Now** introduces the application of what Paul has been saying about **the body** in 12:12–26. You could use a word or phrase that would naturally introduce an application or explanation of what Paul has said in these verses. Alternate translation: “In the end,” or “What I mean is that” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### you are the body of Christ and individually members of {it

Here Paul speaks as if believers were **members**, or body parts, that together make up **the body of Christ**. By speaking in this way, he applies everything he has said in 12:12–26 about “bodies” to the church, and he emphasizes the unity of the church. Paul used **body** language throughout this whole paragraph, and it is an important metaphor for 1 Corinthians and for Christian teaching. Because of this, you should preserve this metaphor or, if you must express the idea differently, use an analogy. Alternate translation: “it is as if you are the body of Christ and individually members of it” or “you function as the body of Christ, and individually you function as members of it” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### individually members of {it

Here, **individually** refers to how specific people are **members** of the **body of Christ**. In other words, discrete people can each be considered a “member”. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **individually** with a word or phrase that identifies people on their own, apart from the communities in which they participate. Alternate translation: “each one of you is a member of it” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:28

### some

Here, **some** refers to the specific people who have the gifts listed in the rest of this verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **some** by clarifying that it refers to the people who have the gifts or titles he gives in the list. Alternate translation: “people to specifically function” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p. 756)**)

### first & second & third

If your language does not use ordinal numbers, you can use cardinal numbers here. Alternate translation: “one, ... two, ... three,” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.743)**)

### church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing

Here Paul could use the numbers and **then** to indicate: (1) that he listed these things in the order in which he thought of them. In this case, there is no special significance to the numbers, and Paul stopped numbering items because he kept listing things after he said **then**. Alternate translation: “church. This includes first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing” (2) that the items are listed in order of importance or authority until Paul starts using **then**. This means that **apostles, prophets, and teachers** have special importance or authority in that order. Alternate translation: “church. Most important are apostles, second are prophets, and third are teachers. Then there are miracles, gifts of healing” (3) that the items are listed in the order in which God uses them in the church, up until Paul starts using **then**. Alternate translation: “church, which first requires apostles, second prophets, and third teachers. Then God gives miracles, gifts of healing”

### then miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, administration, {and} various kinds of tongues

When Paul stops using numbers in his list, he also stops using titles for people and instead names the gifts they have. However, the questions in the next two verses (12:29–30) show that Paul wants the Corinthians to think about these gifts as belonging to specific people. If your readers would be confused by the change from titles to gifts, you could explicitly connect these gifts with the people who perform them. Alternate translation: “then people who perform miracles, then those with gifts of healing, those who help, those who administer, and those who speak various kinds of tongues” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### helps

Here, **helps** could refer to: (1) acts that help other people. Alternate translation: “helpful deeds” (2) service that **helps** the church, which would include administrative work and distributing aid to those in need. Alternate translation: “supporting the church” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### administration

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **administration**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as “administrative” or a verb such as “lead” or “direct.” Alternate translation: “administrative skills” or “the ability to lead” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## and} various kinds of tongues

Here, **various kinds of tongues** has the same meaning it had in [12:10](#). Translate it the same way you did there. (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## of tongues

Here, **tongues** refers to something that one does with one's "tongue," which is to speak a language. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate that **tongues** is a way of speaking about "languages" by using a comparable term or expressing the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "of languages" (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:29

**Not all {are} apostles, are they? Not all {are} prophets, are they? Not all {are} teachers, are they? Not all {do} miracles, do they**

Paul does not ask these questions because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks them to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The questions assume that the answer is “no, they are not” or “no, they do not.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these questions by stating the ideas as strong negations. Alternate translation: “Not all are apostles. Not all are prophets. Not all are teachers. Not all do miracles.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

**Not all {do} miracles, do they**

Here, unlike with the other questions in the verse, supplying **are** does not make sense. Paul is not saying that **Not all “are” miracles**. Rather, he is saying that **Not all** perform **miracles**. You could supply a comparable word that refers to “performing” **miracles**. Alternate translation: “Not all perform miracles, do they” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:30

### Not all have gifts of healing, do they? Not all speak in tongues, do they? Not all interpret, do they

Paul does not ask these questions because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks them to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The questions assume that the answer is “no, they do not.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these questions by stating the ideas as strong negations. Alternate translation: “Not all have gifts of healing. Not all speak in tongues. Not all interpret.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 766)**)

### in tongues

Here, **tongues** refers to something that one does with one’s “tongue,” which is to speak a language. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate that **tongues** is a way of speaking about “languages” by using a comparable term or expressing the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “in other languages” (See: **Metonymy (p. 736)**)

### interpret

Here Paul is speaking about the same “gift” that he mentioned in [12:10](#) as “the interpretation of tongues.” He does not mention what the person “interprets” here because he knows that the Corinthians will infer that he is speaking about the **tongues** in the previous question. If your readers would not infer what the person “interprets,” you could state it explicitly. Alternate translation: “interpret tongues, do they” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 12:31

### earnestly desire

Here, **earnestly desire** could be: (1) a command from Paul. Alternate translation: “you should earnestly desire” (2) a statement about what the Corinthians are doing. Alternate translation: “you are earnestly desiring” (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p.713)**)

### the greater gifts

Here, **greater** could indicate: (1) what Paul thinks are **greater gifts**, which would be the ones that most benefit other believers. Alternate translation: “the gifts that are greater” or “the gifts that help others” (2) what the Corinthians think are the **greater gifts**, which Paul may disagree with. The Corinthians would probably include speaking in tongues as a **greater gift**. If you choose this option, you will need to express **earnestly desire** as a statement, not as an imperative. Alternate translation: “what you think are greater gifts” (See: **Irony (p.719)**)

### I show you

Here Paul introduces what he will tell the Corinthians in the next chapter. Use a natural verb tense in your language for referring to what a person is about to say. Alternate translation: “I am going to show you” (See: **Predictive Past (p.754)**)

# 1 Corinthians 13

## 1 Corinthians 13 General Notes

### Structure and Formatting

On spiritual gifts (12:1–14:40)

- The necessity of love (13:1–3)
- The characteristics of love (13:4–7)
- The enduring nature of love (13:8–13)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

#### Love

Paul's main topic in this chapter is love. He speaks about how important it is, what it is like, and how it will endure forever. Much of the time, it seems that he is emphasizing love for other people. However, he likely also has love for God in mind. See the notes for ways to translate the abstract noun "love" if your language does not use an abstract noun for this idea. (See: **love, beloved (p.804)**)

### Translation Issues in This Chapter

#### Hypothetical situations

In [13:1–3](#), Paul provides three hypothetical situations. He uses these situations to show how essential love is: no matter what other great things a person can do, they must have love. He uses himself as the character in the situations to avoid making someone else an example of a person who does not have love. Consider natural ways to speak about hypothetical situations in your language. If your readers would be confused when Paul uses "I" in the hypothetical situations, you can use a generic reference to a "person" or "someone" instead. (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.707)**)

#### Personification

In [13:4–8a](#), Paul speaks about love as if it were a person who could do things. He speaks in this way because it makes the abstract idea of "love" easier to think about. If your readers would be confused when Paul speaks about love as a person, you can express the idea in another way. See the notes on those verses for translation options. (See: **Personification (p.748)**)

#### Child analogy

In [13:11](#), Paul again uses himself as an example. This time he speaks about what he did as a child and what he does as an adult. He speaks in this way to illustrate how some things are appropriate for specific times. For example, speaking like a child is appropriate when one is a child, but it is not appropriate when one is an adult. Paul wishes the Corinthians to apply this reasoning to spiritual gifts and to love. Spiritual gifts are appropriate until Jesus comes back, but then they will no longer be appropriate. On the other hand, love is always appropriate.



## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Non-exhaustive lists

In [13:4–8a](#), Paul provides a list of love's characteristics. While he mentions many things, he does not intend the list to completely define every characteristic of love. Instead, he wishes to show the Corinthians what love is like. Make sure that your translation does not imply that the characteristics that Paul lists are the only characteristics that love has.

### First-person singular and plural

In [13:1–3](#), [11](#), [12b](#), Paul speaks of himself in the first-person singular. In [13:9](#), [12a](#), Paul includes the Corinthians and other believers with himself by using the first-person plural. However, the alternation between singular and plural, especially in [13:11–12](#), shows that Paul is not drawing any distinctions between his own experiences and those of other believers. Rather, Paul uses himself as an example, but he also wishes to speak about believers in general. If your readers would find switching between first-person singular and first-person plural to be confusing, you can use the first-person plural throughout. (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## 1 Corinthians 13:1

**If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but I do not have love**

### Connecting Statement:

Here Paul is using a hypothetical situation to teach the Corinthians. He wants them to imagine that he could **speak with tongues of men and of angels** but also that he did **not have love**. He uses himself in this hypothetical situation so that he does not offend the Corinthians by using them as an example of people without **love**. Use a natural way in your language to introduce a hypothetical situation. Alternate translation: "Suppose that I could speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but also suppose that I did not have love." (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.707)**)

### with the tongues

Here, **tongues** refers to something that one does with one's "tongue," which is to speak a language. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate that **tongues** is a way of speaking about "languages" by using a comparable term or expressing the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "with the languages" or "in the words" (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

### with the tongues of men and of angels

Here Paul refers to two specific categories of **tongues**: those **of men** and those **of angels**. He does not mean that these are the only kinds of **tongues** that exist, but he does think that these two kinds do exist. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **tongues of men and of angels** with a normal way to refer to various human languages and then also modify it so that you could use it for angelic languages. Alternate translation: "foreign languages and angelic languages" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### I do not have love

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **love**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "love." Alternate translation: "I do not love people" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal

Here Paul speaks as if he were a metallic instrument that makes loud noises. He speaks in this way because he wants to argue that **tongues** without **love** are noisy, like an instrument, but they do not actually help others. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "I have become loud but useless" or "I have become like loud radio static" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal

Here Paul refers to two different loud, metallic instruments in his culture. If your culture does not have two different loud instruments made of metal, you could refer to just one here. Further, if your culture does not use metal instruments, you could refer to two or one instruments that make a loud noise. Alternate translation: "a noisy cymbal" or "a loud drum" (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)

## a noisy gong

Here, **a noisy gong** refers to the sound that comes when someone hits a flat metal object. A **gong** is a metal instrument that someone hits to make a deep, booming sound. You could use a word that identifies a metal instrument in your culture, especially if it makes a loud sound. Alternate translation: “a loud bell” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## a clanging cymbal

A **cymbal** is a thin, round metal plate that someone hits with a stick or another **cymbal** to create a loud crashing sound (**clanging**). You could use a word that describes another metal instrument in your culture, especially if it makes a loud, harsh sound. Alternate translation: “loud percussion” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 13:2

**And if I have prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but I do not have love, I am nothing**

Here, just as in [13:1](#), Paul is using a hypothetical situation to teach the Corinthians. He wants them to imagine that he could **have prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge** and that he could **have all faith so as to remove mountains** but that he did **not have love**. He uses himself in this hypothetical situation so that he does not offend the Corinthians by using them as an example of people without love. Use a natural way in your language to introduce a hypothetical situation. Alternate translation: “And suppose that I had all prophecy and understood all mysteries and knowledge, and suppose that I had all faith so as to remove mountains, but also suppose that I did not have love. In that case, I would be nothing” (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.707)**)

### I have prophecy

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **prophecy**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “prophesy.” Alternate translation: “I can prophesy” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### all mysteries and all knowledge

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **mysteries** and **knowledge**, you can express the ideas in another way, such as with adjectives or verbs. Alternate translation: “everything that is secret and worth knowing” or “all that is hidden and all that there is to know” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### I have all faith

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **faith**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “believe” or “trust.” Paul implies that this is **faith** in God. Alternate translation: “I trust God completely” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### so as to remove mountains

Here, **so as to** introduces a description of what could result from the **faith**. Paul here uses an extreme example to define how great the **faith** is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate how **remove mountains** relates to **faith** by making it clearer that Paul identifies **remove mountains** as an extreme example of what the **faith** can lead to. Alternate translation: “so that I can even remove mountains” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### I do not have love

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **love**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “love.” Alternate translation: “I do not love people” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### I am nothing

Here Paul says that he, if the hypothetical situation were true, would be **nothing**. The Corinthians would have understood him to mean that none of the great things he could do would be worth anything, and he himself would gain no honor or glory from them. Paul does not mean that he would not exist. If it would be helpful in your

language, you could translate **I am nothing** by qualifying Paul's claim or indicating that it refers to honor or value.  
Alternate translation: "I have no value" or "I gain nothing from those great things" (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

## 1 Corinthians 13:3

### And if I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body, so that I might boast, but I do not have love, I gain nothing

Here, just as in 13:1–2, Paul is using a hypothetical situation to teach the Corinthians. He wants them to imagine that he could **give away all** his **possessions** and that he could **hand over** his **body so that he might boast** but that he did **not have love**. He uses himself in this hypothetical situation so that he does not offend the Corinthians by using them as an example of people without love. Use a natural way in your language to introduce a hypothetical situation. Alternate translation: “And suppose that I gave away all my possessions, and suppose that I handed over my body so that I might boast, but also suppose that I did not have love. In that case, I would gain nothing” (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.707)**)

### I hand over my body

Here, **hand over my body** refers to willingly accepting bodily suffering and even death. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **hand over my body** more explicitly. Alternate translation: “I allow others to hurt my body” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### I might boast

In Paul’s language, **I might boast** and “I might be burned” look and sound very similar. While many later manuscripts have “I might be burned” here, the earliest manuscripts have **I might boast**. Unless there is a good reason to translate “I might be burned,” it is best to follow the ULT here and translate **I might boast**. (See: **Textual Variants (p.775)**)

### so that I might boast

Here, **so that** could introduce: (1) a result that comes from “handing over one’s body.” Alternate translation: “that I might then boast” (2) a purpose of “handing over one’s body.” Alternate translation: “in order that I might boast” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### I do not have love

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **love**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “love.” Alternate translation: “I do not love people” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 13:4

### Love is patient {and} is kind; love does not envy; love does not boast; it is not puffed up

Here Paul speaks as if **love** were a person who could be **patient**, **kind**, without **envy**, without “boasting,” and **not arrogant**. Paul speaks in this way to describe the abstract idea of **love** in more concrete ways that are easier to think about. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make Paul’s description of **love** more concrete in another way, such as by speaking about the “people” who **love**. Alternate translation: “If you love others, you are patient and kind; you do not envy; you do not boast, you are not arrogant” (See: **Personification (p.748)**)

### is patient {and} is kind

Here Paul does not connect **is patient** and **is kind** with any other words. He does this because he wants the Corinthians to think of these two ideas as closely connected. Since English speakers would misunderstand this connection, the ULT has added “and” to clarify that these two ideas are connected. If your readers would also misunderstand the connection, you could add a connecting word like the ULT does or you could express **is kind** as its own thought. Alternate translation: “is patient; it is kind” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### does not boast; it is not puffed up

Here, **boast** refers to how people try to draw attention to how great they are, often with words. On the other hand, **arrogant** refers to how highly people think about themselves. If your language has words that fit with these distinctions, you could use them here. If your language does not have words that fit with these distinctions, you can use one general word for “arrogance” or “pride.” Alternate translation: “is not proud” (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)

## 1 Corinthians 13:5

**It is not rude; it does not seek {its} own; it is not easily angered; it does not keep a count of the wrongs**

### Connecting Statement:

Here, just like in 13:4, Paul speaks as if “love” were a person. Continue to follow the translation strategies you chose in that verse. Alternate translation: “If you love others, you are not rude; you are not seeking your own; you are not easily angered; you do not keep a count of wrongs” (See: **Personification (p.748)**)

#### It is not rude

Here, **rude** refers to behavior that is shameful or disgraceful. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **rude** with a word that refers to shameful or disgraceful behavior. Alternate translation: “It does not do disgraceful things” or “it is not inappropriate” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

#### it does not seek {its} own

Here, **{its} own** refers to what is good for oneself. In other words, seeking **{its} own** would mean that “love” is trying to do what is best for itself, not for others. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **it does not seek {its} own** with a comparable idiom or express the idea with a word such as “selfish.” Alternate translation: “it is not selfish” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

#### it is not easily angered

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive here to focus on the person who is **angered** rather than focusing on the one provoking them. If you must state who did the action, you can use a vague or generic subject. Alternate translation: “others do not anger them easily” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

#### it does not keep a count of the wrongs

Here Paul speaks as if someone could **keep a count**, as if they were writing them down and adding them up, of each and every bad thing that others have done. He speaks in this way to describe how people remember **wrongs** and do not forgive them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **keep a count of wrongs** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “it does not hold onto wrongs” or “it is not resentful” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)



## 1 Corinthians 13:6

**It does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices in the truth**

### Connecting Statement:

Here, just like in 13:4-5, Paul speaks as if “love” were a person. Continue to follow the translation strategies you chose in those verses. Alternate translation: “If you love others, you do not rejoice in unrighteousness, but you rejoice in the truth” (See: **Personification (p.748)**)

**It does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices in the truth**

Here Paul uses two negative words, **not** and **unrighteousness**, to indicate a positive meaning. If your language does not use two negative words like this, you can instead use one positive word. If you do so, you will have to make the second half a connection instead of a contrast. Alternate translation: “It rejoices in righteousness and in the truth” (See: **Double Negatives (p.673)**)

**in unrighteousness**

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **unrighteousness**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as “unrighteous” or an adverb such as “unrighteously.” Alternate translation: “unrighteous acts” or “in what people do unrighteously” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

**in the truth**

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **truth**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as “true.” Alternate translation: “in true things” or “things that are true” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 13:7

**It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things**

### Connecting Statement:

Here, just like in 13:4–6, Paul speaks as if “love” were a person. Continue to follow the translation strategies you chose in those verses. Alternate translation: “If you love others, you bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, endure all things” (See: **Personification** (p.748))

**It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things**

### Connecting Statement:

Here, **all things** refers primarily to the situation or time in which “love” **bears, believes, hopes, and endures**. The phrase **all things** does not mean that “love” **believes** everything it hears or **hopes** for everything that could happen. Rather, the point is that “love” **believes** in every situation and **hopes** at all times. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **all things** in a way that more clearly refers to time or situation. Alternate translation: “It bears up in every situation, believes in every situation, hopes in every situation, endures in every situation” (See: **Idiom** (p.710))

**It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things**

### Connecting Statement:

If you follow the previous note and understand **all things** as referring to time or situation, then **bears, believes, hopes, and endures** do not have stated objects. Paul does not state the objects because he wants the description to be general and easily applied to many situations. If you must express objects, the verbs **bears** and **endures** imply that a person **bears** and **endures** bad things that other people do. The verbs **believes** and **hopes** imply that a person **believes** and **hopes** that God will do what he has promised to do. Alternate translation: “It bears what others do in every situation; believes God in every situation; hopes in God in every situation; endures what others do in every situation” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information** (p.626))

**It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things**

### Connecting Statement:

Here Paul repeats **all things** and the same structure in four straight clauses. This was worded powerfully in his culture. If it would be helpful in your language, and if it would not be worded powerfully in your culture, you could indicate why Paul repeats words and structure by eliminate some or all of the repetition and by making the statements powerful in another way. Alternate translation: “It bears, believes, hopes, and endures all things” (See: **Parallelism** (p.745))

**It bears****Connecting Statement:**

Here, **bears** could refer to: (1) keeping things that are outside from getting inside. The point here would be that “love” is able to “bear” or endure bad things that other people do. Alternate translation: “It endures” or “It tolerates” (2) keeping things that are inside from getting outside. The point here would be that “love” protects or shields other people from bad things. Alternate translation: “It protects against” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 13:8

### Love never fails

### Connecting Statement:

Here, just like in 13:4–7, Paul speaks as if **love** were a person. Continue to follow the translation strategies you chose in those verses. Alternate translation: “If you love others, you will never stop doing so” (See: **Personification** (p.748))

### never fails

### Connecting Statement:

Here Paul uses two negative words, **never** and **fails**, to indicate a positive meaning. If your language does not use two negative words like this, you can instead use a strong positive word. Alternate translation: “always keeps going” or “love always continues” (See: **Litotes** (p.724))

**if {there are} prophecies, they will pass away; if tongues, they will cease; if knowledge, it will pass away**

### Connecting Statement:

Here Paul uses the conditional form to identify what he is speaking about. This form does not mean that Paul is unsure about whether **prophecies**, **tongues**, and **knowledge** currently exist. Rather, Paul uses this form to identify each one as the topic of the rest of the clause. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind Paul’s use of **if** hereby using a contrast word such as “although” or by simplifying the clauses so that they do not use **if**. Alternate translation: “although there are prophecies, they will pass away; although there are tongues, they will cease; although there is knowledge, it will pass away” or “prophecies will pass away; tongues will cease; knowledge will pass away” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions** (p.648))

**if {there are} prophecies, they will pass away; if tongues, they will cease; if knowledge, it will pass away**

### Connecting Statement:

Here Paul omits some words that may be required in your language to make a full sentence. If you need these words, you could supply a phrase such as “there are” or “there is.” Since English does need these words in the first clause, the ULT supplies them. You could supply them in just the first clause or in all of the clauses. Alternate translation: “if there are prophecies, they will pass away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will pass away” (See: **Ellipsis** (p.678))

## tongues

### Connecting Statement:

Here, **tongues** refers to something that one does with one's "tongue," which is to speak a language. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate that **tongues** is a way of speaking about "languages" by using a comparable term or expressing the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "special languages" (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

## tongues

### Connecting Statement:

Here, **tongues** has the same meaning it had in [12:10](#), [28](#), [30](#); [13:1](#). Translate it the same way you did in those verses. (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## knowledge, it will pass away

### Connecting Statement:

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **knowledge**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "know." Alternate translation: "secret things that people know, they will pass away" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 13:9

### For

### Connecting Statement:

Here, **For** introduces Paul's reason for saying that prophecies, tongues, and knowledge will pass away. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **For** with a comparable word that introduces a reason why someone has made a claim. Alternate translation: "In fact," or "That is because" (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### in part, & in part

### Connecting Statement:

Here, **in part** refers to how something is only a **part** of a larger whole. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in part** with a comparable expression that indicates that something is only part of a larger whole. Alternate translation: "partially ... partially" or "imperfectly ... imperfectly" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 13:10

### the perfect comes

### Connecting Statement:

Here Paul speaks as if **the perfect** could “come,” by which he means that people experience **the perfect**. He uses this metaphor because he uses the verb **comes** also for Jesus’ return (See: 4:5; 11:26), and he wishes to identify the coming of **the perfect** with the coming of Jesus. The time when **the perfect comes** will be when Jesus comes back. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly and connect **the perfect** to Jesus’ return in another way. Alternate translation: “we experience the perfect at Jesus’ return” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### the perfect & that which is} partial

### Connecting Statement:

Here, **that which {is} partial** refers back to the “knowing” and “prophesying” in 13:9. The phrase **the perfect** contrasts with **partial**, so **the perfect** refers to full knowledge and experience of God and of what God says. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind what **perfect** and **partial** refer to more explicitly. Alternate translation: “the perfect experience of God ... the partial experience of God, including knowledge and prophecy,” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 13:11

**When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put away the things of the child**

### Connecting Statement:

Here Paul uses the first person **I** to describe himself as an example, but he implies that most people experience what he describes here. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **I** with a form that provides a general example. Alternate translation: "When people were children, they spoke like children, they thought like children, they reasoned like children. When they became adults, they put away childish things" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.687)**)

**I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child**

### Connecting Statement:

Here Paul repeats **like a child** and the same structure in three consecutive clauses. This was worded powerfully in his culture. If it would be helpful in your language, and if it would not be worded powerfully in your culture, you could indicate why Paul repeats words and structure by eliminate some or all of the repetition and by making the statements powerful in another way. Alternate translation: "I did everything like a child" "I spoke, thought, and reasoned like a child" (See: **Parallelism (p.745)**)

**I became a man**

### Connecting Statement:

Alternate translation: "I became an adult"

**I put away the things of the child**

### Connecting Statement:

Here Paul speaks as if he took **the things of the child** and **put** them **away** in a box or a closet. He means that he stopped doing **the things of the child**, such as "speaking," "thinking," or "reasoning" **like a child**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "I got rid of childish things" or "I stopped doing childish things" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)



## 1 Corinthians 13:12

### we see

Here Paul does not state what it is that **we see**. The Corinthians would have inferred that he meant that **we see** God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this implication explicitly. Alternate translation: “we see God” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### unclearly in a mirror

Here Paul speaks as if **we** were looking at **a mirror** and could see a reflection **unclearly**. With this metaphor, Paul could be expressing the idea: (1) that **now** we can **see** God only indirectly, like a reflection **in a mirror** is an indirect image. Alternate translation: “an indirect reflection of God, as if we were looking in a mirror” (2) that **now** we can only **see** some things about God, like a **mirror** only imperfectly reflects an image. Alternate translation: “imperfectly, as if we were looking at a vague reflection in a mirror” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### in a mirror

In Paul’s culture, **a mirror** was often made of polished metal. Often, these mirrors were relatively high quality and could reflect images well. Use a word in your language that describes something that reflects an image. Alternate translation: “in a looking glass” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### but then, face

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them explicitly in the previous clause (**we see**). If your language does need these words, you could supply them from that clause, but in the future tense. Alternate translation: “but then, we will see face” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### but then, face to face

Here, **face to face** identifies an action or situation as something that takes place in person. In other words, a person can actually see the other person’s **face**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **face to face** with a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “but then, eye to eye” or “but then, in God’s direct presence” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### then, & then

Here, **then** refers to the time when Jesus comes back and what happens after that. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind what **then** refers to explicitly. Alternate translation: “then, when Jesus returns, ... then, when Jesus returns,” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, just as I also have been fully known

Here Paul switches from first-person plural to first-person singular. Since he is using himself as an example for every believer, there is no special meaning behind the switch. Rather, Paul changes from plural to singular because it was good style in his culture. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this verse in first-person plural as well, or you could include words that clarify that Paul is using himself as an example. Alternate translation:

“Now I, for example, know in part, but then I will know fully, just as I also have been fully known” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## **I know & I will know fully**

Again, Paul does not state what it is that **I know**. The Corinthians would have inferred that he meant that **I know** God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this implication explicitly. Alternate translation: “I know God ... I will know God fully” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## **in part**

Here, just as in [13:9](#), **in part** refers to how something is only a **part** of a larger whole. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in part** with a comparable expression that indicates that something is only **part** of a larger whole. Alternate translation: “partially” or “imperfectly” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## **I also have been fully known**

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive here to focus on the person who is **known** rather than focusing on the one doing the “knowing.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God has also fully known me” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## 1 Corinthians 13:13

### now

Here, **now** could function to: (1) introduce a summary statement about how things are. Alternate translation: “as it is,” (2) give the time during which **these three remain**. Alternate translation: “in the present,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### these three remain

This could indicate that: (1) **these three** will **remain** forever, even after Jesus comes back, in contrast to prophecies, tongues, and knowledge in 13:8, which will “pass away.” Alternate translation: “these three will never pass away” (2) **these three remain** in the present life of believers. Alternate translation: “these three continue on”

### these three remain: faith, hope, {and} love

Here Paul introduces **these three** and then goes on to name them at the end of the sentence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could rearrange pieces of the sentence. Alternate translation: “faith, hope, and love remain, these three” or “three things, faith, hope, and love, remain” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### faith, hope, {and} love

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **faith**, **hope**, and **love**, you can express ideas by using verbs. If you do so, you may need to specify objects for those verbs. Paul implies that **faith** is in God, **hope** is in what God has promised, and **love** is for God and others. Alternate translation: “trusting in God, hopefully waiting for God to act for us, and loving people and God” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### faith, hope, {and} love

Here Paul simply lists the three things without using connecting words. Since English speakers expect a connecting word before the last item in a list, the ULT has included **and** here. If your readers would also expect one or several connecting words in a list, you could include them. Alternate translation: “faith and hope and love” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### the greatest of these

Here Paul does not explicitly say why **love** is **the greatest**. He could imply that: (1) loving God and others is the most important thing to do. Alternate translation: “the most significant of these” (2) **love** is the only one of the **three** that continues after Jesus comes back, and so it is the only one that lasts. Alternate translation: “the most enduring of these” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### is} love

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **love**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “love.” Paul implies that the **love** is for God and others. Alternate translation: “is loving people and God” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

# 1 Corinthians 14

## 1 Corinthians 14 General Notes

### Structure and Formatting

On spiritual gifts (12:1–14:40)

- Prophecy is superior to tongues in the church (14:1–25)
- Order in the church (14:26–40)

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page to make them easier to read. The ULT does this with the quoted words of verse 21. Verse 21 quotes from ([Isaiah 28:11–12](#)).

## Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

### Prophecy

When Paul speaks about “prophecy” or “prophesying,” he is referring to when someone proclaims a message from God. This message could encourage, rebuke, warn, predict, or do many other things. Whatever the “prophecy” is about, it means that a human is speaking a message from God that others can understand. In your translation, use a word or a phrase that refers to God speaking through people. (See: **prophet, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess (p.807)**)

### Tongues

In this chapter, Paul refers many times to “tongues.” A “tongue” could be: (1) an otherwise unknown language that one person speaks to God. (2) the language or languages spoken by angels. (3) foreign languages that believers in the church do not speak. It could refer to any or all of these languages. Since Paul’s words are not very specific, you may also want to use relatively generic terms that refer to “unknown languages” or “special languages.” What Paul emphasizes is that many or most other believers do not understand the language unless someone interprets it, so make sure that your translation uses a word or phrase that refers to language that not many people understand. (See: **tongue, language (p.813)**)

### Interpreting tongues

Paul says that some believers have the “gift” of being able to “interpret” the tongues. These could be the same people who speak the “tongues,” or they could be other people. When someone “interprets” the tongues, he or she either explains what the sounds mean or translates them into a language that the other believers know. Use a word or phrase that refers to explaining or translating unknown languages and sounds. (See: **interpret, interpretation, interpreter (p.799)**)

### The ungifted

In [14:16, 23–24](#), Paul refers to the “ungifted.” This word could describe people who: (1) do not have the “gift” of tongues or interpreting tongues. (2) do not belong to the group of believers. The first option is more likely correct because of the emphasis in this chapter on understanding what others are saying during a gathering of believers.

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Rhetorical questions

In [14:6–9](#), [16](#), [23](#), [26](#), [36](#), Paul uses rhetorical questions. He is not asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to provide him with information. Rather, he is asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to think about how they are acting and what they are thinking. The questions encourage them to think along with Paul. For ways to translate these questions, look for the notes on each verse that include these kinds of questions. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### Building up

In [14:3–5](#), [12](#), [17](#), [26](#), Paul speaks about “building up.” He identifies people and groups of people with buildings, and he refers to making these people or groups stronger and more mature as if it were “building up” the buildings. If you readers would misunderstand this figure of speech, you could use a comparable metaphor for making people or groups stronger and more mature, or you could express the idea plainly. (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### Hypothetical examples

Many times in this chapter, Paul speaks about specific situations that may or may not be real. He uses these hypothetical situations to give examples that support how he wants the Corinthians to think and what he wants them to do. In [14:6](#), [11](#), [14](#), Paul uses himself in hypothetical examples. In [14:16–17](#), [23–25](#), Paul uses the Corinthians in hypothetical examples. See the notes on each verse for ways to introduce each hypothetical situation. (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.707)**)

### “Childlike” metaphor

In [14:20](#), Paul tells the Corinthians that he wants them to be “childlike” about evil, but not “children” in their thoughts, where they should be “mature” or adult in their thinking. In this metaphor, Paul emphasizes how children know little and are not capable of doing very much. He wants the Corinthians to know and do little evil, but he wants them to know much about the truth and do many good things. If your readers would not understand that Paul is speaking about how children know and do very little, you could make this explicit or express the metaphor plainly. (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Holy Spirit or human spirit?

In [14:2](#), [14–16](#), Paul uses a word that could refer to the “Holy Spirit” or to a person’s “spirit.” Similarly, in [14:32](#), Paul uses a word that could refer to specific ways in which the “Holy Spirit” empowers prophets or to the prophet’s own “spirits.” The notes will refer to this issue in each of these verses. In [14:2](#), [32](#), it is recommended that you translate the word in a way that relates it to the Holy Spirit. In [14–16](#), however, Paul contrasts this word with the “mind,” so it is recommended that you translate the word here in a way that relates to a person’s “spirit,” which identifies the inner or nonphysical part of a person that is not their mind. (See: [\[\[rc://tw/dict/bible/kt/holyspirit\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc://tw/dict/bible/kt/spirit\]\]](#))

### Musical instruments

In [14:7–8](#), Paul refers to three musical instruments. The “flute” refers to a hollow tube or pipe that a musician blows into to create notes. The “harp” refers to a frame with strings attached that a musician plucks to create notes. The

“trumpet” refers metal tube with large opening at one end that a musician blows into to create notes. The “trumpet” was often used to send signals during battles. Paul’s point in this verse does not depend upon the exact instruments used. He uses instruments that were common in his culture to make the point that the instruments must make different, recognizable sounds for anyone to understand the music. You could refer to common instruments in your culture that are similar to the ones to which Paul refers. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/other/flute\]\]](#), [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/other/harp\]\]](#), and **trumpet, trumpeters (p.815)**)

## 14:22 and the examples in 14:23–25

In 14:22, Paul says that “tongues” are a “sign” for unbelievers, but “prophecy” is a “sign” for believers. However, in the examples that he gives in 14:23–25, he only speaks about unbelievers, and it is the “prophecy” that leads to the unbeliever repenting and believing. The “tongues” only lead to the unbeliever thinking that believers are “insane.” Most likely, Paul uses two different nuances of “sign” in these verses. A “sign” simply points to something, so “tongues” point to how someone does not belong to the group (an unbeliever), while “prophecy” points to how someone does belong to the group (a believer). When Paul gives the examples of unbelievers hearing both “tongues” and “prophecy,” the “tongues” are a “sign” because they make the unbeliever feel like an outsider. On the other hand, the “prophecy” is a “sign” because it makes the unbeliever into an insider, a believer. See the notes on these verses for translation options, especially for “sign.”

## Function of 14:33b

The clause “As in all the churches of the saints” in 14:33 could modify what goes before it (“God is not of confusion, but of peace”) or what goes after it (“let the women be silent in the churches”). Many translations decide that it modifies what goes after it. This is because, in the other places where Paul refers to all the churches (See: 7:17; 11:16), is talking about how the churches behave, not about who God is. God is the same no matter what church he is connected to. On the other hand, some translations decide that the phrase modifies what goes before it. This is because Paul states “in the church” again in 14:34, which would make “As in all the churches of the saints” redundant if it was connected with that verse. Also, the other places where Paul uses similar phrases (See: verses already mentioned) put the reference to the other churches at the end of the sentence, not at the beginning. Consider how translations that your readers might be familiar with treat this verse. If there is no strong reason to pick one option or the other, you could follow the ULT and UST.

## The details of 14:34–35

In 14:34–35, Paul speaks “the women.” The word that he uses could refer to women in general or more specifically to married women. Translations and commentators are divided over whether these two verses require women in general to be silent in church or whether they require wives to be silent in church. Further, being “silent” could refer to keeping quiet at all times, or it could refer to keeping quiet in certain situations or not saying certain things. There are three major options. First, Paul could be speaking about “wives,” and he could be requiring them to keep quiet while their husbands are speaking or prophesying. In other words, they cannot in public question or examine what their husbands say. Second, Paul could be speaking about “women” in general, and he could be requiring them to avoid certain kinds of talking. This could be speaking while others are speaking, or it could be asking too many questions, or it could be speaking during specific times when male church leaders are speaking. Third, Paul could be speaking about “women” in general, and he could be requiring them to keep quiet during the entire public gathering of believers. See the notes on these verses for the specific translation issues. Part of the problem in these verses is that Paul is not very specific about what he is commanding. If possible, make your translation general enough to allow for several of these interpretations.

## 1 Corinthians 14:1

### Pursue

### Connecting Statement:

Here Paul speaks as if he wants the Corinthians to run after and try to capture **love**. He speaks in this way because he wants them to act in **love** as persistently as someone who “pursues” someone or something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “Consistently act in” or “Seek after” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### love

### Connecting Statement:

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **love**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “love.” Paul implies that the object of **love** is other people. Alternate translation: “loving others” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### but be zealous for

### Connecting Statement:

Here, **but** introduces the next topic that Paul wishes to speak about. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **but** and think that Paul is contrasting **Pursue love** and **be zealous for spiritual gifts** with another word that introduces a new topic, or you could start a new sentence here. If you use the second alternate translation, you may need to add a period before it. Alternate translation: “and be zealous for” or “Be zealous for” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### be zealous for

Here, to **be zealous for** something means that one vigorously seeks after it or strongly desires it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **be zealous for** with a comparable expression. Alternate translation: “set your heart on” or “seek after” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### especially

Here, **especially** could mean: (1) that prophecy is the best **gift** to **be zealous** for. Alternate translation: “above all” (2) that prophecy is better than **spiritual gifts**. Alternate translation: “more than that,”

## 1 Corinthians 14:2

### For

Here, **For** introduces the reasons why Paul wants the Corinthians to especially desire to prophesy. These reasons are found in [14:2-4](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **For** with a comparable way to introduce reasons for a claim. Alternate translation: “Here is why you should be zealous for prophecy:” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### the one speaking in a tongue

Paul is speaking of people “speaking in tongues” in general; he is not speaking of one particular person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to people in general. Alternate translation: “anyone who speaks in a tongue” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### in a tongue

Here and throughout this chapter, translate **tongue** and “tongues” as you did in [13:1](#), [8](#). (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### to men, & but he speaks

Although the words **men** and **he** are masculine, Paul is using them to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “to humans ... but he or she speaks” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### mysteries

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **mysteries**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as “secret” or “mysterious.” Alternate translation: “mysterious words” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### in spirit

Here, **spirit** could refer to: (1) the Holy Spirit, which enables or empowers the person to speak in the **tongue**. Alternate translation: “in God’s Spirit” or “by the power of God’s Spirit” (2) the person’s spirit, which refers to the interior life of a person. It is from this interior life that the **tongue** originates. Alternate translation: “in his spirit”



## 1 Corinthians 14:3

### the one prophesying

Paul is speaking of people “prophesying” in general, not of one particular person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to people in general. Alternate translation: “anyone who prophesies” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### to men

Although **men** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **men** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “to humans” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### for building up

Paul here speaks as if believers were a building that one “builds up.” With this metaphor, he emphasizes that **the one prophesying** helps other believers become stronger and more mature, just like the one who builds a house makes it strong and complete. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. See how you translated this metaphor in [8:1](#). Alternate translation: “for growth” or “for edification” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### encouragement and consolation

Here, **encouragement** refers primarily to “encouraging” others to act or think in a specific way. On the other hand, **consolation** refers primarily to “comforting” others in grief or pain. If your language has words that fit with these distinctions, you could use them here. If your language does not have words that fit with these distinctions, you can use one general word for “exhortation” or **encouragement**. Alternate translation: “exhortation” (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)

### encouragement and consolation

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **encouragement** and **consolation**, you can express the ideas by using verbs such as “encourage” and “console.” Alternate translation: “encouraging and consoling” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:4

### The one speaking in a tongue & the one prophesying

Here, just as in [14:2-3](#), Paul is speaking of people “prophesying” and people “speaking in tongues” in general, not of two particular people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to people in general. Alternate translation: “Anyone who speaks in a tongue ... anyone who prophesies” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### builds up himself, & builds up the church

Just as in [14:3](#), Paul here speaks as if believers were a building that one **builds up**. With this metaphor, he emphasizes that **The one speaking in a tongue** helps himself or herself become stronger and more mature, while **the one prophesying** helps other believers become stronger and more mature, just like the one who builds a house makes it strong and complete. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “helps himself grow ... helps the church grow” or “edifies himself ... edifies the church” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:5

### but even more, that

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them explicitly in the previous clause (**I desire**). If your language does need these words, you could supply them from that clause. Alternate translation: “but I desire even more that” or “but even more, I desire that” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### the one prophesying & the one speaking in tongues

Here, just as in [14:4](#), Paul is speaking of people “prophesying” and people “speaking in tongues” in general, not of two particular people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to people in general. Alternate translation: “anyone who prophesies ... anyone who speaks in tongues” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### is greater

Here, **greater** indicates that **the one prophesying** does something that is more important and helpful than **the one speaking in tongues**. It does not mean that God cares about the person **prophesying** more than the person **speaking in tongues**. If you readers would misunderstand **greater**, you could state explicitly how or in what way the person is **greater**. Alternate translation: “does something more useful” or “does what is more valuable” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### unless he would interpret, so that the church might receive building up

The ULT puts these clauses in parentheses because they give a qualification of what Paul has said about how **the one prophesying is greater than the one speaking in tongues**. In this clause, Paul clarifies that he is only speaking about **tongues** without interpretation. Further, if someone does **interpret** the **tongues**, then that can lead to **building up**, just like prophecy. Use a form in your language that would indicate a qualification or a parenthesis. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a period before it. Alternate translation: “That is true except for when he interprets, so that the church receives building up” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### unless he would interpret, so that the church might receive building up

If it would appear in your language that Paul was making a statement here and then contradicting it, you could reword this to avoid using an exception clause. If you use this alternate translation, you may need to remove the parentheses. Alternate translation: “and does not interpret, because it is only when he interprets that the church receives building up” (See: **Connect — Exception Clauses (p.646)**)

### he would interpret

Here, **he** could refer back specifically to **the one speaking in tongues**, but it does not have to do so. The word **he** could refer to anyone who can **interpret**, not just the person who is speaking **in tongues**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind that **he** refers to anyone more clearly. Alternate translation: “he or somebody else would interpret” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## he would interpret

Although **he** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **he** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “he or she would interpret” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## building up

Paul here speaks as if believers were a building that one “builds up.” With this metaphor, he emphasizes that **the one speaking in tongues** and also “interprets” helps other believers become stronger and more mature, just like the one who builds a house makes it strong and complete. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. See how you translated this metaphor in [14:3](#). Alternate translation: “growth” or “edification” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:6

### But now, brothers

Here, **But now** introduces what Paul thinks is true. The word **now** does not refer to time here. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **But now** with a word or phrase that introduces what a person thinks is true. Alternate translation: “As it is, brothers,” or “But what is true, brothers, is that” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### brothers

Although **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non-gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “brothers and sisters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### I come & will I benefit & I speak

Here Paul uses the first person to give himself as an example. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the first person as a generic third person. Alternate translation: “somebody comes ... will he or she benefit ... he or she speaks” or “people come ... will they benefit ... they speak” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.687)**)

### if I come to you speaking in tongues, what will I benefit you unless I speak to you either in revelation or in knowledge or in prophecy or teaching

If your language would normally express what will **benefit** the Corinthians before what will not **benefit** them, you could rearrange this verse. Alternate translation: “will I not benefit you if I speak to you in revelation or in knowledge or in prophecy or teaching? But will I benefit you at all if I come to you speaking in tongues?” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### if I come to you speaking in tongues, what will I benefit you unless I speak to you

Here Paul is using a hypothetical situation to teach the Corinthians. He wants them to imagine that he is coming to them **speaking in tongues**. He uses himself in this hypothetical situation to illustrate that he could do this if he wanted to and also because he does not want to offend someone else by saying that they do not **benefit** others. Use a natural way in your language to introduce a hypothetical situation. Alternate translation: “suppose that I came to you speaking in tongues. What would I benefit you unless I spoke to you” (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.707)**)

### I come to you

Here Paul is speaking about his plan to visit the Corinthians at some point. Use a form in your language that indicates future travel plans to visit someone. Alternate translation: “I arrive where you live” (See: **Go and Come (p.694)**)

## **what will I benefit you unless I speak to you either in revelation or in knowledge or in prophecy or teaching**

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “nothing.” In other words, Paul would be of no **benefit** at all. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negation. Alternate translation: “I will not benefit you unless I speak to you either in revelation or in knowledge or in prophecy or teaching.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## **what will I benefit you unless I speak to you**

If it would appear in your language that Paul was making a statement here and then contradicting it, you could reword this to avoid using an exception clause. Alternate translation: “will I not benefit you only when I speak to you” (See: **Connect — Exception Clauses (p.646)**)

## **either in revelation or in knowledge or in prophecy or teaching**

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **revelation**, **knowledge**, **prophecy**, or **teaching**, you can express the ideas by using verbs such as “reveal,” “know,” “prophecy,” and “teach.” Alternate translation: “either to show you things or to make you understand things or to prophesy to you or to instruct you” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:7

### Even lifeless things giving sounds—whether flute or harp—if they would not give different sounds

Here Paul identifies what he is talking about first (**lifeless things giving sounds—whether flute or harp**) and then refers back to that phrase by using **they** in his sentence. If your readers would be confused by this structure, you could restructure the sentence and indicate what Paul is talking about in another way. Alternate translation: “If even lifeless things giving sounds—whether flute or harp—would not give different sounds” or “Take even lifeless things giving sounds—whether flute or harp—as an example. If they would not give different sounds” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### lifeless things

Here **lifeless things** are things are inanimate objects, things that have never been alive. Paul is specifically thinking of instruments that humans use to make sounds. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **lifeless things** with a word or phrase that normally refers to things that have never been alive. Alternate translation: “inanimate things” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### giving sounds—& they would not give different sounds

In Paul’s culture, people would speak about how something could **give** a sound. This means that the thing creates or makes the sound. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **giving sounds** or **give different sounds** with a comparable idiom or expression. Alternate translation: “creating sounds ... they would not create different sounds” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### if they would not give different sounds

Here Paul is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he is already convinced that the condition is not true. He knows that **flute** and **harp** really do **give different sounds**. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: “if they actually did not give different sounds” (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

### they would not give different sounds

Here Paul refers to how an instrument like a **flute** or a **harp** produces many **different sounds**. It is only because it produces a variety of different sounds that it can create a melody or a song. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate what Paul is talking about here by making it more explicit that he is talking about how different sounds make up a song or melody. Alternate translation: “they did not make many different pitches” or “they did not create various notes” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### how will the thing being played on the flute or the thing being played on the harp be known

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “it will not.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negation. Alternate translation: “the thing being played on the flute or the thing being played on the harp will not be known.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

**the thing being played on the flute or the thing being played on the harp**

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul here uses the passive to emphasize the song instead of the person who plays the song. If you must state who did the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: “what a person plays on the flute or what a person plays on the harp” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

**how will the thing being played on the flute or the thing being played on the harp be known**

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you must state who did the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: “how will anyone know the thing being played on the flute or the thing being played on the harp” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)



## 1 Corinthians 14:8

### For indeed

Here, **For indeed** introduces another example that further supports what Paul said in the previous verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **For indeed** with a word or phrase that introduces another example. Alternate translation: “Again,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### if a trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle

In Paul’s culture, soldiers would often use **a trumpet** to issue commands or signals before or during a **battle**. These signals could indicate that an enemy was coming, that the soldiers should attack or retreat, or various other things. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state explicitly that Paul jumps from talking about **a trumpet** to talking about a **battle** because the **trumpet** was used in warfare. Alternate translation: “if a trumpet gives an uncertain sound when a soldier uses it to signal other soldiers, who will prepare for battle” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### if a trumpet gives an uncertain sound

Here Paul is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he is already convinced that the condition is not true. He knows that **a trumpet** really does “give” a certain or clear **sound**. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: “if a trumpet actually were to give an uncertain sound” (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

### gives an uncertain sound

In Paul’s culture, people would speak about how something **gives** a **sound**. This means that the thing creates or makes the **sound**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **gives an uncertain sound** with a comparable idiom or expression. See how you translated this idiom in [14:7](#). Alternate translation: “creates an uncertain sound” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### an uncertain sound

Here, **an uncertain sound** refers to notes that are not easily recognized or are difficult to hear. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **an uncertain sound** with a word or phrase that refers to notes that are played poorly or are hard to hear. Alternate translation: “an unclear sound” or “an indistinct sound” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### who will prepare for battle

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “no one will.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negation. Alternate translation: “people would never prepare for battle.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:9

### In the same way also you, unless

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. The Corinthians would have inferred that Paul meant they would be like instruments that do not make clear sounds. If your readers would not infer that information, and if your language requires more words to make a complete thought, you could supply them. Alternate translation: “You are like those instruments. Unless” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### In the same way also you, unless you give intelligible speech with your tongue

Here, **tongue** could refer to: (1) the human body part that people use to speak words. In this case, **with your tongue** modifies **give intelligible speech**. Alternate translation: “In the same way also you, unless you use your tongue to give intelligible speech” (2) the unknown language that some of the Corinthians were speaking. In this case, **with your tongue** modifies the first **you**. Alternate translation: “You act in the same way when you speak in a tongue. Unless you give intelligible speech”

### you give intelligible speech

Here, to **give intelligible speech** refers to making words that other people understand. If your language does not use **give** for **speech** or words, you can use a comparable expression. Alternate translation: “you speak intelligible words” or “you talk in intelligible language” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### intelligible speech

Here, **intelligible speech** refers to words and sentences that other people can understand. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **intelligible speech** with a comparable expression that identifies language that can be understood. Alternate translation: “understandable speech” or “words that others can comprehend” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### how will the thing being spoken be understood

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “it will not be understood.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question with a strong negation. Alternate translation: “the thing being spoken will never be understood.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### will the thing being spoken be understood

If your language does not use the passive form in these ways, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses passive forms here to avoid stating who is speaking and who is understanding, which makes his question more general. If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that “you” are speaking and some other person is understanding. Alternate translation: “someone understand what you are speaking” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### speaking into the air

Here, **speaking into the air** is a way to say that the speech or words have no effect. In other words, no people but only **the air** hears the **speech**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **speaking into the air**

with a comparable expression that describes words that have no effect or meaning. Alternate translation:  
“speaking empty words” or “talking to nothing” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:10

### doubtless

Here, **doubtless** indicates that Paul is assuming that there are **so many kinds of languages**. He is not arguing this and is not interested in proving it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **doubtless** with a comparable word or phrase that refers to something that is assumed to be true. Alternate translation: “assuredly” or “certainly” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### none {is} without meaning

Here, **without meaning** could refer to: (1) how all the **languages** “communicate” clearly among those who know those languages. Alternate translation: “and none communicate nothing” (2) how all the languages use “sound” or “voice” to communicate. Alternate translation: “none is without sound” or “all of them use the voice”

### none {is} without meaning

Here Paul uses a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that means the opposite of the intended meaning. If this is confusing in your language, you can express the meaning positively. Alternate translation: “all have meaning” (See: **Litotes (p.724)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:11

### **If then I would not know the meaning of the language, I will be a foreigner to the one speaking, and the one speaking {will be} a foreigner to me**

Here Paul is using a hypothetical situation to teach the Corinthians. He wants them to imagine that he is with somebody who speaks a language that he does not know. In this situation, he and the other person are “foreigners” to each other. Use a natural way in your language to introduce a hypothetical situation. Alternate translation: “Suppose, then, that I do not know the meaning of a specific language. In this situation, I am a foreigner to anyone who speaks that language, and anyone who speaks that language is a foreigner to me” (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.707)**)

### **If then**

Here, **then** could introduce: (1) an inference from the previous verse. In other words, if every language communicates meaning (14:10), **then** a person who does not understand that meaning is **a foreigner** to the person who speaks that language. Alternate translation: “Therefore, if” (2) a contrast with the previous verse. In other words, although every language communicates meaning (14:10), a person who does not understand the language cannot grasp that meaning. Alternate translation: “But if” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### **If then I would not know the meaning of the language**

Here Paul uses the conditional form to show that not knowing **the meaning of the language** leads to being a **foreigner to the one speaking** that language. If the conditional form does not indicate a cause-and-effect relationship like this in your language, you could express the **If** statement in a way that does show the relationship. Alternate translation: “Then, whenever I do not know the meaning of the language” or “Suppose then that I do not know the meaning of the language. Then,” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### **I would not know & I will be & me**

Here Paul uses the first person to give himself as an example. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the first person as a generic third person. Alternate translation: “somebody does not know ... he or she will be ... him or her” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.687)**)

### **the meaning of the language**

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **meaning**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “communicates” or “means.” Alternate translation: “what the language means” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### **a foreigner & will be} a foreigner**

Here, **foreigner** identifies someone with whom one does not share a culture and language. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **foreigner** with a comparable term for someone who has a different language and culture. Alternate translation: “an outsider ... will be an outsider” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### **to the one speaking, & the one speaking**

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them explicitly in the first clause (**the language**). If your language does need these words, you

could supply them from that clause. Alternate translation: “to the one speaking the language ... the one speaking the language” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:12

### So also you

Here, **So also you** introduces the conclusion Paul wishes to draw from what he has said in [14:1-11](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the function of **So also you** with a comparable phrase that introduces a conclusion or inference. Alternate translation: “In line with all of that” or “Given what I have said” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### So also you

Here Paul omits some words that your language may need to make a complete thought. If your language does need these words, you could supply a phrase such as “should act in this way.” Alternate translation: “So also you should behave in the following way:” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### seek that you would abound in them

Here, **seek that you would abound** refers to desiring to have more of something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this construction with a comparable phrase that indicates a desire to have or do more. Alternate translation: “desire to overflow with them” or “endeavor to gain more of them” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### for the building up of the church

Here Paul uses the possession form to speak about **building up** that affects the **church**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this form by translating **building up** as a verb with **church** as its object. Alternate translation: “so that you could build up the church” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### the building up

Paul here speaks as if believers were a building that one “builds up.” With this metaphor, he emphasizes that the Corinthians should focus on helping other believers become stronger and more mature, just like the one who builds a house makes it strong and complete. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. See how you translated this metaphor in [14:3](#), [5](#). Alternate translation: “the growth” or “the edification” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:13

### let the one speaking in a tongue pray

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “must.” Alternate translation: “the one speaking in tongues must pray” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### the one speaking in a tongue

Paul is speaking of people “speaking in tongues” in general, not of one particular person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to people in general. Alternate translation: “anyone who speaks in a tongue” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### he might interpret

Here Paul omits what the person is going to **interpret** since he already stated it in the previous clause (**a tongue**). If you need to specify what the person will **interpret**, you could include a reference to the **tongue** here. Alternate translation: “he might interpret it” or “he might interpret what he said in the tongue” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### he might interpret

Although **he** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **he** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “he or she might interpret” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)



## 1 Corinthians 14:14

### If I would pray in a tongue, my spirit

Here Paul uses the conditional form to show that praying **in a tongue** leads to the **spirit** praying but the **mind** being **unfruitful**. If the conditional form does not indicate a cause-and-effect relationship like this in your language, you could express the **If** statement in a way that does show the relationship. Alternate translation: “Whenever I pray in a tongue, my spirit” or “Suppose that I pray in a tongue. Then, my spirit” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### I would pray & my & my

Here Paul uses the first person to give himself as an example. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the first person as a generic third person, or explicitly state that Paul is an example. Alternate translation: “somebody would pray ... his or her ... his or her” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.687)**)

### my spirit prays

Here, **spirit** could refer to: (1) the inner part of a person, a part that contrasts with the **mind** but that is not somehow superior or closer to God. Alternate translation: “my inner spiritual being prays” or “my heart prays” (2) the Holy Spirit directing the **spirit** of a person. Alternate translation: “the Holy Spirit prays with my spirit” or “the Holy Spirit directs my inner spiritual being in prayer”

### my mind is unfruitful

Here Paul speaks as if his **mind** were a plant or tree that could produce “fruit.” He states that his **mind** is **unfruitful** to indicate that it is not doing anything useful, just like a fruit tree that does not produce fruit. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “my mind does nothing” or “my mind is not involved” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:15

### What then is it

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. He himself gives the answer to the question in the next sentences. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question by using a word or phrase that introduces a conclusion or solution. Alternate translation, as a statement: "I will tell you what I do." or "This, then, is what to do." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind. & with my spirit, and I will also sing with my mind

Here, just as in [14:14](#), Paul uses the first person to give himself as an example. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the first person as a generic third person, or explicitly state that Paul is an example. Alternate translation: "People should pray with their spirits, and they should also pray with their minds. People should sing with their spirits, and they should also sing with their minds" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.687)**)

### but I will also pray with my mind. & and I will also sing with my mind

Here, doing things **with my mind** could happen: (1) at the same time as doing things **with my spirit**. In other words, Paul is saying that he will use both his **spirit** and **mind** at the same time when he "prays" or "sings." Alternate translation: "and I will use my mind also ... and I will use my mind also" (2) at a different time as doing things **with my spirit**. In other words, Paul is saying that he sometimes use his **spirit** and sometimes use his **mind**. Alternate translation: "but other times I will pray with my mind ... but other times I will sing with my mind" (See: **Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship (p.660)**)

### with my spirit, & with my spirit

Here, just as in [4:14](#), **spirit** could refer to: (1) the inner part of a person, a part that contrasts with the **mind** but that is not somehow superior or closer to God. Alternate translation: "with my inner spiritual being ... with my inner spiritual being" or "with my heart ... with my heart" (2) the Holy Spirit directing the **spirit** of a person. Alternate translation: "as the Holy Spirit directs my spirit ... as the Holy Spirit directs my spirit" or "as the Holy Spirit directs my inner spiritual being ... as the Holy Spirit directs my inner spiritual being"

## 1 Corinthians 14:16

### if you bless with the spirit, how

Here Paul uses the conditional form to show that blessing **with the spirit** leads to **the one filling the place of the ungifted** being unable to **say the “Amen”**. If the conditional form does not indicate a cause-and-effect relationship like this in your language, you could express the **if** statement in a way that does show the relationship. Alternate translation: “whenever you bless with the spirit, how” or “Suppose that you bless with the spirit. Then, how” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### you bless & your thanksgiving, & you are saying

Here Paul switches from using himself as an example to using one of the Corinthians as an example. Because of this, every **you** in this verse is singular. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the second-person singular as a second-person plural, or explicitly state that **you** functions as an example. Alternate translation: “you, for example, bless ... your thanksgiving ... you are saying” (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p. 690)**)

### you bless with the spirit

Here Paul is speaking about someone who is using **thespirit** only and not the “mind” to speak in “tongues.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could state explicitly that this is what Paul is talking about. Alternate translation: “you bless in tongues with the spirit only” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p. 626)**)

### with the spirit

Just as in [4:14–15](#), **spirit** could refer to: (1) the inner part of a person, a part that contrasts with the mind but that is not somehow superior or closer to God. Alternate translation: “with your inner spiritual being” or “with your heart” (2) the Holy Spirit directing the **spirit** of a person. Alternate translation: “by the power of the Holy Spirit” or “as the Holy Spirit directs your inner spiritual being”

### how will the one filling the place of the ungifted say the “Amen” at your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you are saying

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. Here, the answer to the question is “he cannot.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question by using a strong negation. Alternate translation: “the one who fills the place of the ungifted will not be able to say the ‘Amen’ at your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you are saying.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### the one filling the place of the ungifted

Here Paul speaks as if there were a **place** for **the ungifted** which they would “fill.” He speaks in this way to characterize the person by the **place** they “fill.” In other words, a person **filling the place of the ungifted** is characterized as **ungifted**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “the one who is ungifted” or “the ungifted person” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## the one filling

Paul is speaking of people who “fill” **the place of the ungifted** in general, not of one particular person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to people in general. Alternate translation: “anyone who fills” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

## of the ungifted

Here, **the ungifted** could refer to: (1) any person who does not understand the “tongue” in which the person is speaking. Alternate translation: “of the one who does not understand tongues” or “of the uninitiated” (2) a person who is not part of the Christian group. Alternate translation: “of the outsider” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## will & say the “Amen” at

Here, to **say the “Amen”** refers to responding in agreement to something that someone has said. This is because, in Christian gatherings, the word **Amen** was a common way to affirm or agree with someone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **Amen** or why people would say it by using a word that indicates agreement or by referring simply to agreement. Alternate translation: “will ... agree with” or “will ... say that he agrees with” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## at your thanksgiving

Here, **your thanksgiving** refers back to what the person said when they were “blessing” **with the spirit**. Paul uses a different word here, but they mean basically the same thing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **thanksgiving** by translating this phrase so that it clearly refers back to **bless with the spirit**. Alternate translation: “at what you said” or “at your blessing” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## at your thanksgiving

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **thanksgiving**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “thank.” Alternate translation: “at how you thanked God” or “at what you thanked God for” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## he does not know

Although **he** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **he** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “he or she does not know” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:17

### you certainly give thanks

Here Paul continues to use one of the Corinthians as an example. Because of this, **you** in this verse is singular. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the second-person singular as a second-person plural, or explicitly state that **you** functions as an example. Alternate translation: “you, for example, certainly give thanks” (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.690)**)

### the other {person}

Paul is speaking of **other** people in general, not of one particular person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with a form that refers to people in general. Alternate translation: “any other person” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.692)**)

### the other {person} is not built up

Just as in 14:4, Paul here speaks as if a person were a building that one “builds up.” With this metaphor, he emphasizes that **you** who are “giving thanks” are not helping other people become stronger, unlike the one who builds a house and thus makes it strong and complete. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “the other person is not helped to grow” or “the other person is not edified” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### the other {person} is not built up

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to emphasize the person who **is not built up** rather than emphasizing the person who is not doing the building up. If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that “you” did it. Alternate translation: “you do not build up the other person” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:18

### all of you

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them explicitly in the previous clause (**speak in tongues**). If your language does need these words, you could supply them from that clause. Alternate translation: “all of you speak in tongues” (See: **Ellipsis (p. 678)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:19

### in the church

Here, **in the church** is a spatial metaphor that speaks of the **church** as if it were a place **in** which people could gather. Paul speaks in this way to indicate the situation which he is discussing: a gathering of believers that meets to worship God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in the church** by clarifying that **the church** refers to a gathering of believers for worship. Alternate translation: “in the gathering of believers” or “during the worship service” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### five

Here Paul refers to **five** words to indicate just a few words in contrast to the **myriads** he will mention later on in the verse. There is no special significance to the number **five**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express and think that **five** is a special number with a number that would not be considered special or indicate that Paul has “a few” words in mind. Alternate translation: “four” or “only several” (See: **Numbers (p.740)**)

### so that I might also instruct others, than myriads of words in a tongue

If your language would naturally state the rest of the comparison before the purpose, you could rearrange these clauses. You may need to start a new sentence when you express the purpose. Alternate translation: “than myriads of words in a tongue. That way, I might also instruct others” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### myriads of words

Here, much like in 4:15, **myriads of words** is an exaggeration that the Corinthians would have understood to mean a large number of **words**. If **myriad** would be misunderstood in your language, you could use a word or phrase that refers to a large number. Alternate translation: “many words” or “a large number of words” (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:20

### Brothers

Although **Brothers** is in masculine form, Paul is using it to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders.

Alternate translation: "Brothers and sisters" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### do not become children & be childlike in evil

Here, much like in [13:11](#), Paul compares people to **children**. He is particularly thinking about how children do not know very much or do very much. Paul does not want the Corinthians to be like children in how children know very little. Rather, he wants the Corinthians to be like children in how children do very little **evil**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech as an analogy or in a nonfigurative way. If possible, preserve the metaphor, because Paul has already used "child" language in [13:11](#). Alternate translation: "do not be immature, like children, ... do very little evil, like children," (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### Rather, be childlike in evil, but become mature in the thoughts

If your language would naturally express the contrast before the comparison, you could move the clause about being **mature** before the clause about being **childlike**. Alternate translation: "Rather, become mature in the thoughts, and only be childlike in evil" (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### in evil

Alternate translation: "about evil"



## 1 Corinthians 14:21

### In the Law it is written

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to emphasize the words rather than emphasizing whoever wrote the words. If you must state who did the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: “In the Law someone wrote” or “They wrote in the Law” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### In the Law it is written

In Paul’s culture, **it is written** is a normal way to introduce a quotation from an important text, in this case, the Old Testament book titled “Isaiah” (See: [Isaiah 28:11–12](#)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable phrase that indicates that Paul is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: “It can be read in the Law” or “In the Law, the book of Isaiah says” (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

### In the Law

Here, **Law** refers to all of the scriptures of Israel that we call the Old Testament. It does not refer just to the first five books or to books that have “laws.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Law** with a term that refers more clearly to the Old Testament. Alternate translation: “In the Scriptures” or “In the Israelites’ sacred book” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### it is written, By {people} of other tongues and by the lips of strangers I will speak to this people, but not even in this way will they hear me,” says the Lord

If you do not use this form in your language, you could translate these statements as indirect quotes instead of as direct quotes. Alternate translation: “it is written that by people of other tongues and by the lips of strangers God will speak to this people, but not even in this way will they hear him. So says the Lord” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

### By {people} of other tongues and by the lips of strangers

Here Paul quotes two phrases that mean basically the same thing. In Paul’s culture, poetry often included repetition of the same idea in different words. If your readers would not recognize this as poetry, and if they would misunderstand why Paul repeats the same idea, you could combine these two phrases into one. Alternate translation: “By strangers of other tongues” (See: **Parallelism (p.745)**)

### people} of other tongues

Here, **tongues** refers to words that people speak with their **tongues**. It primarily refers here to foreign languages, not primarily to unknown languages spoken in Christian worship. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **tongues** with a word or phrase that refers to foreign languages. Alternate translation: “by people of other languages” or “people who speak different languages” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

## the lips of strangers

Here, **lips** refers to words that people speak with their **lips**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **lips** with a word or phrase that refers to what people say. Alternate translation: “the words of strangers” or “the speech of strangers” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

## to this people

The Corinthians would have understood **this people** to refer to the people of Israel. If your readers would not make this inference, you could indicate it explicitly. Alternate translation: “to the people of Israel” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## I will speak to this people, but not even in this way will they hear me,” says the Lord

Here Paul includes **says the Lord** to indicate who spoke the words he quotes. If your language would indicate who is speaking before or in the middle of the quote, you could move **says the Lord** to a more natural place. Alternate translation: “I will speak to this people,’ says the Lord, ‘but not even in this way will they hear me.”” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:22

**are for a sign**

### Connecting Statement:

Here, **sign** could be: (1) a negative indication of God's judgment or wrath. This would fit with what the quotation from Isaiah in the last verse suggests. Alternate translation: "are an indication of God's judgment" (2) a positive indication of what convicts or impresses people. This would fit with what "signs" means in 1:22, but it does not fit well with the next two verses (See: 14:23–24). Alternate translation: "are impressive" or "are convicting"

**a sign, not to the ones believing, but to the unbelievers; & is} not to the unbelievers, but to the ones believing**

### Connecting Statement:

If your language would naturally put those whom the signs are **to** before those whom they are **not to**, you could rearrange the clauses so that the **not** clause is second. Alternate translation: "a sign to the unbelievers, not to those who believe ... is to those who believe, not to the unbelievers" (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

**prophecy {is} not**

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. The Corinthians could have inferred: (1) the words "is for a sign," since Paul used these words in the first half of the verse. Alternate translation: "prophecy is for a sign, not" (2) the word "is," since Paul's language often implies "is" when there is no verb. See the ULT. (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

**prophecy {is} not**

If Paul implies "is for a sign" here, then "sign" could mean what it meant earlier in the verse, but it more likely means something different. "Sign" could be: (1) a positive indication of what convicts or impresses people. Alternate translation: "prophecy is impressive, not" or "prophecy is convicting, not" (2) a negative indication of God's judgment or wrath. Alternate translation: "prophecy is an indication of God's judgment, not"

**prophecy**

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **prophecy**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "prophesy." Alternate translation: "what people prophesy" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:23

**If, therefore, the whole church might come together to the same place and they would all speak in tongues, but ungifted or unbelievers would come in, will they not say**

Here Paul is using a hypothetical situation to teach the Corinthians. He wants them to imagine that **the whole church** is together, and **all speak in tongues**. Then, he wants them to imagine what would happen if **ungifted or unbelievers** are present and hear **all speaking in tongues**. Use a natural way in your language to introduce a hypothetical situation. Alternate translation: "Suppose, then, that the whole church comes together to the same place, and they all speak in tongues. Suppose that ungifted or unbelievers come in. Will they not say" (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.707)**)

**might come together to the same place**

Here Paul uses both **come together** and **to the same place** to emphasize that he is speaking about an official gathering of the church for worship. If your language does not use two similar phrases for emphasis like Paul does, then you can use just one phrase and indicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "might come together" or "might be in the same place" (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)

**ungifted**

Here, just as in [14:16](#), **ungifted** could refer to: (1) any person who does not understand the **tongues** that the other people are speaking. Alternate translation: "people who do not understand tongues" or "uninitiated" (2) a person who is not part of the Christian group. Alternate translation: "outsiders" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

**would come in**

Your language may say "would go in" rather than **would come in** in this situation. Use whatever form is natural. Alternate translation: "would go in" (See: **Go and Come (p.694)**)

**will they not say that you are insane**

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The implied answer to the question is "yes, they will." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question by using a strong affirmation. Alternate translation: "they will definitely say that you are insane." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

**you are insane**

People who are **insane** act in ways that are not normal or acceptable. Often these ways are dangerous, strange, or irrational. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **insane** with a word or phrase that identifies people who are acting in irrational and strange ways. Alternate translation: "you are out of your minds" or "you are mad" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

**you are insane**

Here, **you** refers back to **the whole church** and **they** who **speak in tongues**. Paul switches from third person to second person to apply the hypothetical situation to the Corinthians. If it would be helpful in your language, you

could express this switch with second person earlier in the verse or use the third person here. Alternate translation:  
“the church is insane” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.687)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:24

### if they all would prophesy, but some unbeliever or ungifted person might come in, he is convicted

Here Paul is using a hypothetical situation to teach the Corinthians. He wants them to imagine that **all would prophesy**, and he implies that the whole church is together for this hypothetical situation, just like for the last one (See: [14:23](#)). Then, he wants them to imagine what would happen if **some unbeliever or ungifted person** is present and hears **all** prophesying. Use a natural way in your language to introduce a hypothetical situation. Alternate translation: “suppose that they all would prophesy. Suppose that some unbeliever or ungifted person comes in. In that situation, he is convicted” (See: [Hypothetical Situations \(p.707\)](#))

### they all would prophesy

Here Paul uses the third person because he is again using a hypothetical situation. However, he wants the Corinthians to apply this hypothetical situation to themselves. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that **they** applies to the Corinthians with the second person instead. Alternate translation: “you all would prophesy” (See: [First, Second or Third Person \(p.687\)](#))

### ungifted person

Here, just as in [14:23](#), **ungifted** could refer to: (1) any person who does not understand the tongues that the other people are speaking. Alternate translation: “person who does not understand tongues” or “uninitiated person” (2) a person who is not part of the Christian group. Alternate translation: “outsider” (See: [Translate Unknowns \(p.780\)](#))

### might come in

Your language may say “might go in” rather than **might come in** in this situation. Use whatever form is natural. Alternate translation: “might go in” (See: [Go and Come \(p.694\)](#))

### he is convicted by all, he is examined by all

Here Paul uses the same words and structure twice, only changing the verb. He does this to emphasize how the “prophecy” affects the **unbeliever or ungifted person**. If your language does not use repetition for emphasis, and if your readers might be confused as to why Paul repeats himself, you can combine these two clauses into one. Alternate translation: “he is confronted by all” or “he is convicted and examined by all” (See: [Parallelism \(p.745\)](#))

### he is convicted by all, he is examined by all

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive here to emphasize the person who is **convicted** or **examined** rather than emphasizing the **all** that is doing the actions. Alternate translation: “all convict him, all examine him” (See: [Active or Passive \(p.621\)](#))

### he is convicted & he is examined

Although **he** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **he** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “he or she is convicted ... he or she is examined” (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women \(p.785\)](#))

**by all, & by all**

Here, **all** could refer to: (1) everything that the people who **prophesy** are saying. Alternate translation: “by all that is said ... by all that is said” or “by all the words ... by all the words” (2) **they all** who are prophesying. Alternate translation: “by all who are prophesying ... by all who are prophesying”

## 1 Corinthians 14:25

### the secrets of his heart

In Paul's culture, the **heart** is the place where humans think and plan. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **heart** as the place where humans think in your culture, or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "the secrets of his mind" or "his secret thoughts" (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

### the secrets of his heart become visible

Here Paul speaks as if **the secrets of his heart** were invisible objects that could **become visible**. He speaks in this way to indicate that others now know **the secrets** as much as if they saw them **become visible**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "the secrets of his heart become known" or "the secrets of his heart are revealed" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### having fallen on his face

In Paul's culture, "falling" **on** one's **face** refers to kneeling down and putting one's **face** close to the ground. This was a position used to show respect and sometimes worship. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **having fallen on his face** with a comparable expression for a physical position used to show respect or worship, or you could express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "having bowed down" or "kneeling to show respect" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### his & his face, he will worship

Although **his** and **he** are masculine, Paul is using them to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **his** and **he** with non gendered words or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: "his or her ... his or her face, he or she will worship" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### declaring, "God is really among you

If you do not use this form in your language, you could translate this statement as an indirect quote instead of as a direct quote. Alternate translation: "declaring that God is really among you" (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)



## 1 Corinthians 14:26

### What then is to be, brothers

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. He himself gives the answer to the question in the next sentences. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question by using a word or phrase that introduces a conclusion or a clarification. Alternate translation: "This is what it is, brothers." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### What then is to be

Here Paul could be asking this question about: (1) what his argument means for the Corinthians. Alternate translation: "What then do I mean" (2) what the Corinthians should be doing. Alternate translation: "What then should you do" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### brothers

Although **brothers** is in masculine form, Paul is using it to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: "brothers and sisters" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### you come together

Here, **come together** refers to a group gathering in a specific place. Your language may say "go" or "gather" rather than **come** in contexts such as this. Use whatever is most natural. Alternate translation: "you go together" or "you assemble together" (See: **Go and Come (p.694)**)

### each one

Here, **each one** refers to specific or individual believers in the Corinthian church. Paul does not mean that every person **has** each of these things, and he also does not mean that **each** person has only one of these things. Rather, he means that individual people within the Corinthian church may have any of these things **When you come together**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **each one** with a word or phrase that more clearly indicates that Paul is speaking in general. Alternate translation: "every one of you" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, {or} has an interpretation

Here Paul repeats **has** in order to emphasize any believer might "have" any of these things **When you come together**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express why Paul repeats **has** with another form that indicates that any person might have any of these things. Alternate translation: "has a psalm or a teaching or a revelation or a tongue or an interpretation" (See: **Parallelism (p.745)**)

### has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, {or} has an interpretation

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **revelation** or **interpretation**, you can express the ideas by using verbs such as "reveal" and "interpret." If you do, you may need to translate all the items in the list

with verbal phrases. Alternate translation: “sings a psalm, instructs, explains something that was secret, speaks in a tongue, or interprets a tongue” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## an interpretation

Here, just as in [12:10](#), **interpretation** refers specifically to interpreting **a tongue**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state explicitly that the **interpretation** is about is an **interpretation** of a **tongue**. Alternate translation: “an interpretation of a tongue” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## Let all things happen for building up

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “must.” Alternate translation: “All things must happen for building up” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

## building up

Paul here speaks as if believers were a building that one “builds up.” With this metaphor, he emphasizes that the Corinthians should focus on helping other believers become stronger and more mature, just like the one who builds a house makes it strong and complete. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. See how you translated this metaphor in [14:12](#). Alternate translation: “the growth” or “the edification” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## for building up

Here the Corinthians would have understood Paul to mean that the **building up** applies to other believers. If your readers would not infer this, you could state it explicitly. Alternate translation: “for building up believers” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:27

### If

Paul is speaking as if someone “speaking” **in a tongue** was a hypothetical possibility, but he knows that someone often does “speak” **in a tongue**. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, and if your readers might think that what Paul is saying is not certain, then you can express the idea with a word that refers to a situation rather than to a possibility. Alternate translation: “Whenever” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.648)**)

### it should be} by

Here Paul omits some words that may be required in your language to make a complete thought. English needs these words, so the ULT has supplied them in brackets. If your language also needs these words, you could use these or similar ones. Alternate translation: “this should be done by” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### it should be} by two or at most three

Paul does not explicitly state in what situation only **two or at most three** believers should speak **in a tongue**. The Corinthians would have understood him to be speaking about each time the believers gathered to worship God (See: the expression “in the church” in [14:28](#)). Paul does not mean that only **two or most three** people can ever speak in tongues. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express what situation Paul is speaking about more explicitly. Alternate translation: “it should be by two or at most three every time you gather together” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### in turn

Here, **in turn** means that people do something one after the other or in order. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in turn** with a word or phrase that refers to doing things successively or in order. Alternate translation: “in order” or “successively” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### one must interpret

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “let.” Alternate translation: “one should interpret” or “let one interpret” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### one

Here Paul does not indicate whether **one** is one of the people who is speaking **in a tongue** or if it is someone else. It is likely that Paul thinks that both options are acceptable. If possible, you should translate **one** in such a way that it could refer to one of the people speaking **in a tongue** or to someone else. Alternate translation: “somebody” or “one person” (See: **When to Keep Information Implicit (p.787)**)

### must interpret

Here, just as in [14:26](#), **interpret** refers specifically to interpreting a **tongue**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state explicitly that the person should **interpret** the **tongue**. Alternate translation: “must interpret the tongue” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:28

### if

Much like in 14:27, Paul is speaking as if **an interpreter** not being present was a hypothetical possibility, but he knows that sometimes this is true. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, and if your readers might think that what Paul is saying is not certain, then you can express the idea with a word that refers to a situation rather than to a possibility. Alternate translation: “whenever” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.648)**)

### an interpreter

Here, much like in 14:26–27, **interpreter** refers specifically to someone who can interpret a tongue. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state explicitly that the **interpreter** is the person who “interprets” the tongue. Alternate translation: “an interpreter for the tongue” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### there is not an interpreter

Just as in 14:27, the **interpreter** could be someone who speaks in tongues or some other person. If possible, you should translate **an interpreter** in such a way that it could refer to one of the people speaking in a tongue or to someone else. Alternate translation: “no one can interpret” (See: **When to Keep Information Implicit (p.787)**)

### let him be silent & let him speak to himself

Although **him** and **himself** are masculine, Paul is using them to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **him** and **himself** with non gendered words or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “let him or her be silent ... let him or speak to himself or herself” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### let him be silent & let him speak

Here Paul uses two third-person imperatives. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use them here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the ideas using a word such as “should” or “must.” Alternate translation: “he needs to be silent ... he needs to speak” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### let him be silent & let him speak

Here, **let him be silent** and **let him speak** refer specifically to speaking in “tongues.” They do not refer in general to any speaking **in church**. If your readers would not infer this information, you could state it more explicitly. Alternate translation: “let him not speak the tongue ... let him speak the tongue” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### in the church

Here, just as in 14:19, **in the church** is a spatial metaphor that speaks of the **church** as if it were a place **in** which people could gather. Paul speaks in this way to indicate the situation which he is discussing: a gathering of believers that meets to worship God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in the church** by clarifying that **the church** refers to a gathering of believers for worship. Alternate translation: “in the gathering of believers” or “during the worship service” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## to himself and to God

Here, **to himself and to God** could refer to: (1) how the person should keep the “tongue” between **himself** and **God**. In other words, the only people who experience the “tongue” are the person speaking it and God. This would mean that the person speaking the “tongue” says words in their head or very quietly. Alternate translation: “in his mind to God” or “quietly to God” (2) how the person should speak the “tongue” after the meeting is over and “he” is by **himself**. In this way, only the person who speaks the “tongue” and **God** hear it. Alternate translation: “to God when he is by himself” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:29

### But

Here, **But** introduces similar instructions about a new topic (prophecy). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **But** with a word or phrase that introduces a related topic. Alternate translation: “In the same way,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases** (p.662))

### let two or three prophets speak

Paul does not explicitly state in what situation **two or three prophets** should **speak**. He does not mean that only **two or three** prophets can ever speak. He could be speaking about: (1) each time the believers gathered to worship God. Alternate translation: “let two or three prophets speak every time you gather together” (2) the periods between when **the others evaluate**. In this case, **two or three prophets** can speak before the evaluation happens. Alternate translation: “let two or three prophets speak consecutively” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information** (p.626))

### two or three

Here, **two or three** does not restrict the number of prophets to only those two numbers. Rather, Paul uses **two or three** to give a general idea of how many **prophets** should **speak** when believers gather for worship. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **two or three** by including a word or phrase that indicates that Paul is giving examples or rough estimates. Alternate translation: “roughly two or three” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information** (p.626))

### let two or three prophets speak, and let the others evaluate

In this verse, Paul uses two third-person imperatives. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use them here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the ideas using a word such as “should” or “must.” Alternate translation: “two or three prophets must speak, and the others must evaluate” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives** (p.777))

### the others

Here, **the others** could refer to: (1) all the believers who are not prophesying. Alternate translation: “the rest of the believers” (2) all the prophets who are not prophesying. Alternate translation: “the other prophets” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them** (p.756))

### let the others evaluate

Here Paul does not state what **the others** are supposed to **evaluate**. He implies that it is what the **prophets speak**. If your readers would not make this inference, you could refer to what the **prophets speak** explicitly. Alternate translation: “let the others evaluate what they say” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information** (p.626))

## 1 Corinthians 14:30

### if

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that **something** might be **revealed to another**, or it might not. He specifies the result for **something is revealed to another**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by introducing it with a word such as “when” or “suppose.” Alternate translation: “when” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### something} is revealed to another sitting there

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form to keep the focus on the “revelation” and the person who receives it. If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that “God” did it. Alternate translation: “another who is sitting there receives a revelation” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### to another sitting there

Here, **sitting** implies that the person is participating in the worship when the believers gather together. It further implies that the person is not the one speaking since the speaker would stand in Paul’s culture. If your readers would not make these inferences, you could state them explicitly. Alternate translation: “to another who is sitting and listening” or “to another worshiper who is listening” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### let the first be silent

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “must.” Alternate translation: “the first must be silent” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### the first

Here, **the first** refers back to one of the “two or three prophets” in [14:29](#). It identifies the person who is speaking while **another** is **sitting there**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the first** with a word or phrase that identifies the person who is speaking while **something is revealed to another**. Alternate translation: “the one currently prophesying” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:31

### For

Here, **For** introduces the reason why Paul wants “the first” speaker to “be silent” when another receives a revelation (See: [14:30](#)); if they do what he asks, **all are able to prophesy**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **For** with a word that introduces a reason for a command. Alternate translation: “Do that because, in this way,” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### all

Here Paul does not state who **all** are. He implies that **all** refers to everyone who receives a revelation from God (See: [14:30](#)). He does not have in mind every single believer who gathers together. If your readers would not infer this information, you could state it explicitly. Alternate translation: “all who receive a revelation” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### one by one

Here, **one by one** means that people do something one after the other or in order. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **one by one** with a word or phrase that refers to doing things successively or in order. Alternate translation: “in order” or “in turn” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### all may be encouraged

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form to emphasize the person who is **encouraged** instead of the person doing the encouraging. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that the ones who **prophesy** do it. Alternate translation: “the prophets may encourage all” or “the prophecies may encourage all” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)



## 1 Corinthians 14:32

### the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive here to focus on the **spirits** rather than focusing on the **prophets**. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that **prophets** do it. Alternate translation: “prophets subject the spirits of prophets” or “prophets govern the spirits of prophets” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### the spirits of prophets are subject to

Here, **the spirits of the prophets** could refer to: (1) the “spiritual” gift that the **prophets** have by the power of the Holy Spirit. This is supported by [14:12](#), where the word that is here translated **spirits** is there translated “spiritual gifts.” Alternate translation: “the spiritual gifts of prophets are subject to” or “what the Holy Spirit enables prophets to do is subject to” (2) the **spirits** that are part of the **prophets**, that is, their inner life or nonphysical parts. Alternate translation: “how the prophets act is subject to” or “the minds of prophets are subject to” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### prophets

Here, **prophets** could refer to (1) the same **prophets** who have **the spirits**. In this case, **prophets** control their own **spirits**. Alternate translation: “these prophets” (2) other **prophets**. In this case, some **prophets** (those who are not speaking) control the **spirits** of different **prophets** (those who are speaking). Alternate translation: “the other prophets”

# 1 Corinthians 14:33

## For

Here, **For** introduces the reason why “the spirits of the prophets are subject to prophets” (14:32). Since the prophetic gift comes from God, it should fit with who God is. Since God is **not of confusion, but of peace**, so the prophetic gift must be **of peace** as well. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **For** with a word or phrase that introduces a reason or basis for a statement. Alternate translation: “you could know this because” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

## God is not of confusion, but of peace

If your language would not naturally state the negative before the positive, you could reverse the order of the **not** statement and the **but** statement. Alternate translation: “God is of peace, not of confusion” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

## God is not of confusion, but of peace

Here Paul uses the possessive form to state that **God** is characterized by **peace**, not by **confusion**. If your language does not use the possessive form to characterize someone, you can use a form that does do this. Alternate translation: “God is not a confused God but a peaceful God” or “God is not related to confusion but to peace” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## of confusion, but of peace

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **confusion** and **peace**, you can express the idea by using adjectives such as “confused” and “peaceful.” Alternate translation: “confused, but peaceful” or “a confused God, but a peaceful God” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## εἰρήνης. ὡς ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῶν ἁγίων,

The phrase **As in all the churches of the saints** could modify: (1) the two verses that follow. Supporting this option is how the first half of this verse sounds like a conclusion and how it does not make much sense to say that **God** is a specific way **in all the churches**. See the ULT for this option. (2) the first sentence in this verse. Supporting this option is how “in the churches” is repeated near the beginning of the next verse and how Paul uses a phrase similar to this one at the end of sentences (See: 4:17; 7:17). Alternate translation: “of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

## in all the churches

Here, **in all the churches** is a spatial metaphor that speaks of the **churches** as if they were a place in which people could gather. Paul speaks in this way to indicate the situation which he is discussing: the gatherings of believers who meet to worship God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in all the churches** by clarifying that **the churches** refers to gatherings of believers for worship. Alternate translation: “in all the gatherings of believers” or “in all the worship services” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:34

### the women

Here, **women** could refer to: (1) married **women** (and possibly **women** with close male relatives). In support of this view is the reference to “their own husbands” in 14:35. Alternate translation: “wives” (2) **women** in general. Alternate translation: “women” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### let the women be silent & to speak

Here, **be silent** and **speak** could refer to: (1) speaking or not speaking in specific situations related to “examining” prophecies (See: 14:29). These specific situations would be when the woman’s husband or close male relative is the one who has prophesied. Alternate translation: “let the women be silent when their husbands are prophesying ... to speak when their husbands are prophesying” (2) speaking or not speaking in disruptive ways, particularly asking questions improperly, talking loudly, or speaking out of turn. Paul is using **be silent** as he did in 14:28, 30: it does not prohibit any kind of talking but refers to “keeping quiet” when speaking would be disruptive. Alternate translation: “let the women avoid disruptive talk ... to disrupt worship by speaking” (3) any official speaking, including prophecy, discerning prophecies, and tongues. Alternate translation: “remain silent ... ever to speak” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### let the women be silent

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “must.” Alternate translation: “the women must be silent” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### in the churches

Here, **in the churches** is a spatial metaphor that speaks of the **churches** as if they were a place in which people could gather. Paul speaks in this way to indicate the situation which he is discussing: the gatherings of believers who meet to worship God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in the churches** by clarifying that **the churches** refers to gatherings of believers for worship. Alternate translation: “in the gatherings of believers” or “in the worship services” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### it is not permitted for them

Here, **it is not permitted** is a way to indicate that a custom or a practice is strongly forbidden. It does not state who forbids the custom or practice but rather indicates that this is generally accepted. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **it is not permitted** with a comparable word or phrase that refers to a general prohibition. Alternate translation: “they are not allowed” or “they are not able” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### to be in submission

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “let.” Alternate translation: “let them be in submission” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

## to be in submission

Here Paul does not state to whom or what the **women** are **to be in submission**. If possible, you also should not express what they are **to be in submission** to. If you must consider the object of **submission**, Paul could imply that the **submission** is to: (1) husbands (or other close male relatives). Alternate translation: “to be in submission to their husbands” (2) to the order God has given the church. Alternate translation: “to act in line with the order of the church” (3) to the church as a whole, particularly the leaders. Alternate translation: “to be in submission to other believers” or “to be in submission to the leaders” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## just as also the law says

Here Paul does not specify what he means by **law**. It could refer to [Genesis 3:16](#). However, it may just be a more general reference to the first five books of the Old Testament (the “Pentateuch”) or to the entire Old Testament (as Paul uses **law** in [14:21](#)). If possible, do not clarify what meaning of **law** Paul had in mind, since he does not identify exactly what he means by **law**. Alternate translation: “just as you can find it in God’s commandments” or “just as it is written in the scriptures” (See: **When to Keep Information Implicit (p.787)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:35

### if

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that they might **desire to learn anything**, or they may not. He specifies the result for **if they desire to learn anything**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the **if** statement by introducing it with a word such as “whenever” or “suppose.”

Alternate translation: “whenever” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### they desire to learn anything

Here Paul does not state what the “women” or “wives” might **desire to learn** about. He could imply that they want **to learn** more and **ask** questions about: (1) what their husbands have said **in church**. Alternate translation: “they desire to learn anything about what their husbands have said” (2) what anyone has said **in church**. Alternate translation: “they desire to learn about what someone said” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### let them ask

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “must.” Alternate translation: “they must ask” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### it is disgraceful

Here Paul does not express for whom this behavior is **disgraceful**. He almost certainly means that it brings “disgrace” on the woman and probably her family too. It may also bring “disgrace” on the whole group of believers. If possible, use an expression that is general enough to capture any or all of these ideas. Alternate translation: “it is shameful” or “it brings shame” (See: **When to Keep Information Implicit (p.787)**)

### for a woman

Here, just as in [14:34](#), **woman** could refer to: (1) any married **woman** (and possibly any **woman** with close male relatives). In support of this view is the reference to **their own husbands** in this verse. Alternate translation: “for a wife” (2) any **woman** in general. Alternate translation: “for any woman” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### in church

Here, **in church** is a spatial metaphor that speaks of the **church** as if it were a place in which people could gather. Paul speaks in this way to indicate the situation which he is discussing: the gathering of believers who meet to worship God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in church** by clarifying that **church** refers to a gathering of believers for worship. Alternate translation: “in the gathering of believers” or “in the worship service” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:36

### Or

The word **Or** introduces an alternate to the instructions that Paul has given about proper order in worship, including what he has said in 14:27–35 but especially 14:33b–35. Paul uses **Or** to indicate that thinking that **the word of God** went **out from** them is the opposite of obeying what he has said. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Or** with a word or phrase that introduces an alternative. Alternate translation: “Suppose you do not want to follow my instructions. Consider this:” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### Or did the word of God go out from you? Or did it come only to you

Paul does not ask these questions because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks them to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The questions assume that the answer to both is “no, it did not.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these questions by stating the ideas with strong negations. If you do so, you will need to replace **Or** with different transition words. Alternate translation: “Indeed, the word of God certainly did not go out from you, and it certainly did not come only to you.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### did the word of God go out & did it come

Here Paul speaks as if **the word of God** were a person who could travel. He speaks in this way to emphasize **the word** over the people who proclaim that **word**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate that people travel with the **word** and indicate the emphasis on **the word of God** in another way. Alternate translation: “did the people who proclaim the word of God go out ... did people who proclaim it come” (See: **Personification (p.748)**)

### did the word of God go out & did it come only to you

In the first question, **go out** refers to the Corinthians as the source of the **word of God**. In the second question, **come** refers to the Corinthians as the recipients of the **word of God**. Use movement words that make this clear in your language. Alternate translation: “did the word of God depart ... did it reach only you” (See: **Go and Come (p.694)**)

### the word of God

Here, **word** represents what someone says in words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **word** with an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: “the message of God” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

### the word of God

Here Paul uses the possessive to describe a **word** that is: (1) from **God**. Alternate translation: “the word from God” (2) about **God**. Alternate translation: “the word about God” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:37

### If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual

Here Paul speaks as **If** some of the Corinthians might think that they are “prophets” or **spiritual**, but he knows that some of them do think in this way. He uses **If** to identify these people as the ones that he is addressing. If your language does not use **If** to identify a certain group of people, you can use a form that does do this. Alternate translation: “Whoever thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.648)**)

### thinks himself & let him acknowledge

Although **himself** and **him** are masculine, Paul is using these words to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **himself** and **him** with non gendered words or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “thinks himself or herself ... let him or her” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### let him acknowledge

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word or phrase such as “should” or “needs to.” Alternate translation: “he needs to acknowledge” or “he should acknowledge” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### I write

Here Paul uses the present tense to refer to this letter, 1 Corinthians. If your language would not use the present tense to refer to a letter that one is currently writing, you could use the tense that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “I have written” (See: **Predictive Past (p.754)**)

### a command of the Lord

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe the **command** as: (1) a **command** that he gives with the authority of **the Lord**. Alternate translation: “a command that the Lord authorizes” or “a command that has the Lord’s authority” (2) a **command** that **the Lord** gave or currently gives. Alternate translation: “a command that the Lord gives” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### a command of the Lord

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **command**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “command.” Alternate translation: “what the Lord commands” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 14:38

### if anyone is ignorant

Here Paul speaks as **if** some of the Corinthians might be **ignorant**, but he expects that some of them truly might be. He uses **if** to identify these people as the ones that he is addressing. If your language does not use **if** to identify a certain group of people, you can use a form that does do this. Alternate translation: “whoever is ignorant” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.648)**)

### is ignorant, let him be ignorant

Here, **ignorant** could refer to: (1) the opposite of “acknowledge” in the last verse (14:37), that is, not accepting the authority of something or someone. Alternate translation: “does not acknowledge this, let him not be acknowledged” (2) not knowing that something is true. Alternate translation: “does not know this, let him continue not to know”

### is ignorant

Here Paul does not state what the person **is ignorant** about. However, the previous verse (14:37) implies that the person **is ignorant** about how what Paul has written is a command of the Lord. If your readers would not infer this information, you could state it explicitly. Alternate translation: “is ignorant that I am writing a command from the Lord” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### let him be ignorant

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “must.” Alternate translation: “he must be ignorant” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### let him be ignorant

Here Paul does not state who is letting **him be ignorant**. He could mean: (1) that the Corinthians should **let him be ignorant**. Alternate translation: “you should let him be ignorant” (2) that God lets **him be ignorant**. Alternate translation: “God will let him be ignorant” or “God will consider him ignorant” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### let him be ignorant

Although **him** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **him** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “let him or her be ignorant” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### let him be ignorant

In Paul’s language, **let him be ignorant** and “he is considered ignorant” look and sound very similar. While some early and important manuscripts have “he is considered ignorant” here, many early and important manuscripts have **let him be ignorant**. Unless there is a good reason to translate “he is considered ignorant,” it is best to follow the ULT here. (See: **Textual Variants (p.775)**)



## 1 Corinthians 14:39

### So then

Here, **So then** introduces a conclusion of the argument from [14:1–38](#). Use a word or phrase in your language that introduces the conclusion to an argument. Alternate translation: “Therefore” or “To sum up” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### brothers

Although **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using the term to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “brothers and sisters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### to speak in tongues

Alternate translation: “speaking in tongues”

## 1 Corinthians 14:40

### let all things be done

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form to avoid stating who is “doing” **all things**, which makes the imperative more general. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “you” do the action. Alternate translation: “you should do all things” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### let all things be done

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “must.” Alternate translation: “all things must be done” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### properly

Here, **properly** refers to behavior that is appropriate for the situation. See how you translated the similar word “appropriate” in 7:35. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **properly** with a word or phrase that refers to appropriate or decent behavior. Alternate translation: “correctly” or “decently” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### in order

Here, **in order** refers to how things, people, and actions are in proper place and sequence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in order** with a word or phrase that indicates such proper and organized things, people, and actions. Alternate translation: “in an organized way” or “in a correctly arranged way” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

# 1 Corinthians 15

## 1 Corinthians 15 General Notes

### Structure and Formatting

On the Resurrection of the Dead (15:1–58)

- The Gospel and Resurrection (15:1–11)
- Proof of Christ's Resurrection (15:12–34)
- The Resurrection Body (15:35–58)

Some translations set each line of poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to make it easier to read. The ULT does this with the quotations from the Old Testament in [15:54b](#) (from [Isaiah 25:8](#)) and [15:55](#) (from [Hosea 13:14](#)).

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

#### Denying the resurrection

In [15:12](#), Paul notes that some of the Corinthians are denying the resurrection of the dead. There are at least three possible reasons why they might do this: (1) they hold to a philosophy or theology that denies afterlife altogether; (2) they believe that some form of resurrection has already happened; and (3) they think that the body is not valuable or cannot resurrect. It is likely that a combination of these three reasons may account for why some Corinthians were denying that the dead resurrect. However, Paul himself only argues for the resurrection, and he does not explain what the Corinthians believe. So, you do not need to choose a specific view about why some of the Corinthians were denying the resurrection.

#### The resurrection of the body

Throughout this chapter, Paul emphasizes that the resurrection of Christ and believers is in the body. He clarifies that this is a glorious, transformed body, but it is still a body. Make sure that you express Paul's references to "resurrection" or "being raised" in such a way that they imply that bodies are given life again. Paul does not clarify in this chapter what happens to nonbelievers, since he focuses on believers. At the same time, he uses very general language to refer to "the resurrection of the dead." If possible, preserve this general language without making any explicit claims about what happens to nonbelievers after they die. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/resurrection\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/other/raise\]\]](#))

#### Adam and Christ

In [15:45–49](#), Paul uses the "first man" Adam (the first human that God created) and the "last man" Jesus (the first human to rise from the dead) to speak about the current body and the resurrection body. Paul's point is that everyone who is alive now on earth has a body like Adam's, while those who rise from the dead will have a body like Jesus' body. In this way, Jesus is a "Second Adam" because he is the first human to have the new kind of body. Make sure that your readers know who "Adam" is and that these verses compare and contrast Adam and Jesus. (See: [Adam \(p.790\)](#))

## “Natural” and “spiritual” bodies

In 15:44, Paul introduces the terms “natural” and “spiritual” to describe two different kinds of bodies. He also refers to the “natural” body as “perishable” and “mortal,” and he refers to the “spiritual” body as “imperishable” or “incorruptible” and “immortal.” The contrast between these two kinds of bodies is not about how material or fleshly they are. Rather, the contrast is about whether they can die or not and whether they can live in the world when God has renewed it or not. Use words that make contrasts between different kinds of bodies, not words that make contrasts between bodies and other things, such as spirits. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/body\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/body\]\]](#))

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Falling asleep

In 15:6, 18, 20–21, Paul refers to people “falling asleep.” In his culture, this was a polite way to refer to dying. It is also possible that Paul uses this euphemism because people who “fall asleep” eventually “wake up,” just like those who die will eventually resurrect. However, “falling asleep” is a common euphemism for dying, so Paul may not mean anything more than that. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate “falling asleep” by using a comparable euphemism or expressing the idea plainly. See the notes on these verses for translation options. (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

### Parallelisms

In this chapter, and particularly in 15:39–44, 53–55, Paul uses parallel structures to make his point powerfully. Often, these parallel structures repeat every word except for one or two. The words that are different either add further ideas or make distinctions between ideas. If repetition is powerful in your language, preserve these parallelisms. If it would be helpful in your language, you could omit some words. In some cases, multiple parallel clauses can be expressed as one clause. In other cases, multiple parallel clauses can be expressed in shortened form using lists. See the notes on these verses for translation options. (See: **Parallelism (p.745)**)

### Rhetorical questions

In 15:12, 29–30, 32, 55, Paul uses rhetorical questions. He is not asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to provide him with information. Rather, he is asking these questions because he wants the Corinthians to think about how they are acting and what they are thinking. The questions encourage them to think along with Paul. For ways to translate these questions, look for the notes on each verse that includes these kinds of questions. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### Hypothetical arguments

In 15:13–19, Paul shows the Corinthians what would be true if the dead were not raised. He does not believe that this is true, but he assumes that it is true for the sake of his argument. These verses thus build from the hypothesis that the dead are not raised and go on to show that many other things which the Corinthians believe and do are worthless if the hypothesis is true. Use a form in your language that shows that Paul does not believe that the dead are not raised but that he uses this claim as the basis for a hypothetical argument. See the notes on these verses for translation options. (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

### Farming analogy

In 15:36–38, Paul uses a farming analogy. Just as a seed is sown (buried) in the ground and then transforms into a plant that looks very different than the seed, so also the human body is buried in the ground and then is

transformed into a new body that is different than the one we have now. Paul returns to the language of “sowing” in [15:42–44](#) but applies it directly to bodies. If possible, preserve the farming language throughout these sections, and use words and phrases that match farming techniques in your culture.

## Translation Issues in This Chapter

### Son subordinated to Father?

In [15:28](#), Paul says that “the Son himself” will “be subjected” to the Father, “the one who subjected all things to him.” This does not mean that the Son is inferior to the Father or is no longer God. Rather, it means that the Son obeys the Father, and the Father acts through the Son. Avoid using words or phrases in your language that imply that the Son is inferior to the Father in nature, power, or glory. Instead, use words or phrases that imply that the Son obeys and acts for the Father when relating to what God has created. (See: **Translating Son and Father (p. 783)**)

### “Body” in the singular

In [15:35–54](#), Paul speaks about a “spiritual body” and a “natural body.” While he varies the descriptors he uses and sometimes uses adjectives alone without the word “body,” he always refers to each of these bodies in the singular. He does this because his language uses the singular form to speak about a category. Thus, when Paul speaks about a “spiritual body,” he is referring to the category to which spiritual bodies belong. If your language does not use the singular form to refer to a category, or if your readers would find the singular form confusing, you can use a plural form or another form that your language uses to refer to a category. The UST models several different options throughout the chapter.

### Common sayings

In [15:32–33](#), Paul quotes two sayings that the Corinthians would have recognized. While the saying in [15:32](#) can also be found in [Isaiah 22:13](#), Paul does not seem to have Isaiah in mind. Rather, he assumes the Corinthians would know both of the sentences he quotes as common sayings. Use a form in your language that introduces common sayings. (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:1

### Now

### Connecting Statement:

Here, **Now** introduces a new topic that Paul will speak about for many verses. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Now** with a word or phrase that introduces a new topic. Alternate translation: “Moving on,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### I make known to you, brothers

Paul makes it clear in the rest of the verse that this is not the first time he has made **known** the **gospel** to the Corinthians. If **I make known to you** sounds like Paul is making it known for the first time, you could use a word or phrase that indicates that Paul is reminding them of the **the gospel** or giving them more information about it. Alternate translation: “I again make known to you, brothers,” or “I remind you, brothers, about”

### brothers

### Connecting Statement:

Although **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “brothers and sisters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### on which also you stand

Here Paul speaks as if **the gospel** were something solid **on which** the Corinthians could **stand**. He speaks in this way to indicate that **the gospel** is trustworthy, like a firm foundation or a well-built floor. He also speaks in this way to indicate that the Corinthians trust **the gospel** as much as if it were a floor that was keeping them from falling. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “which also you trust completely” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:2

### by which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to what word I proclaimed to you

If your language would naturally state the condition before the main statement, you could rearrange these two clauses. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a period before it. Alternate translation: "If you hold firmly to the word I proclaimed to you, by it also you are being saved" (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### by which also you are being saved

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you must state who does the action, Paul could imply that: (1) God does it by means of the "gospel." Alternate translation: "through which God is also saving you" (2) the gospel does it. Alternate translation: "which also is saving you" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### you are being saved

Here Paul uses the present tense to speak about the Corinthians' salvation. Paul could use this tense because: (1) he wants the Corinthians to realize that they are only finally **saved** when Jesus comes back, and right now they are in the process of **being saved**. Alternate translation: "you are currently being saved" or "you will be saved" (2) he is using the present tense to speak about something that is generally true. He does not have a specific time in mind for when the Corinthians are **saved**. Alternate translation: "you are saved"

### if

Here Paul uses the conditional form to show that holding **firmly to the word** leads to **being saved**. If the conditional form does not indicate a cause-and-effect relationship like this in your language, you could express the **if** statement in a way that does show the relationship. Alternate translation: "as long as" or "when" (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### you hold firmly to what word

Here Paul speaks as if **what word** were a physical object that the Corinthians could **hold firmly to**. He speaks in this way to refer to trust or belief that is as strong as someone's grip on an object that they do not wish to lose. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "you never let go of the word" or "you persistently believe the word" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### to what word

Here, **word** represents what someone says in words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **word** with an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: "to what" (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

### unless you believed in vain

Here, **unless** introduces the opposite of holding **firmly to the word**. Paul means that they **believed in vain** if they do not **hold firmly to the word**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this contrast by stating the contrast more explicitly. If you use the following alternate translation, you may need to add a period before it.

Alternate translation: "However, if you do not hold firmly to the word, you believed in vain" (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)



## 1 Corinthians 15:3

### I delivered to you among the first

Here Paul speaks as if the gospel that he preached to the Corinthians were a physical object that he **delivered** to them. By speaking in this way, he emphasizes that he truly taught the Corinthians the gospel, and they now know it as well as if they held it in their hands. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “I instructed you among the first in” or “I handed over to you among the first” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### among the first

Here, **among the first** could mean that: (1) what Paul is about to say is one of the **first** things he told them when he visited Corinth. Alternate translation: “as one of the first things I said” (2) what Paul is about to say is one of the most important things he told them when he visited Corinth. Alternate translation: “as one of the most important things I said” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### what I also received

Here Paul does not clarify from whom he **received** this information. In [11:23](#), which uses very similar words, Paul says that he “received” things “from the Lord.” Here, then, it is likely that he also **received** what he is about to say “from the Lord.” However, he may also mean that he **received** this specific way of expressing the good news from another human being. Since Paul avoids stating from whom he **received** what he is about to say, you should also try to avoid stating it. If you must state whom he **received** it from, you could refer to “the Lord” or generally to people. Alternate translation: “what I also received from the Lord” or “what I also received from others” (See: **When to Keep Information Implicit (p.787)**)

### for our sins

Alternate translation: “in order to deal with our sins”

### according to the Scriptures

In Paul’s culture, **according to** was a normal way to introduce a reference to an important text. In this case, Paul does not state exactly which part of **the Scriptures** he has in mind but rather refers to **the Scriptures** as a whole. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express how Paul introduces the quotation with a comparable phrase that indicates that Paul is referring to an important text. Alternate translation: “as the Scriptures say” or “as can be read in the Scriptures” (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:4

### he was buried

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive to avoid saying who **buried** him, so if you must state who did the action, you can use a generic or nonspecific subject. Alternate translation: “they buried him” or “someone buried him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### he was raised

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive here to focus on Jesus, who **was raised**, rather than focusing on the one doing the “raising.” If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that “God” did it. Alternate translation: “God raised him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### he was raised

Here, **raised** refers to someone who had died then coming back to life. If your language does not use **raised** to describe coming back to life, you can use a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “he was restored to life” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### on the third day

If your language does not use ordinal numbers, you can use a cardinal number here. Alternate translation: “on day three” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.743)**)

### on the third day

In Paul’s culture, the current **day** was counted as the “first day.” So, **the third day** would refer to two days after **he was buried**. If Jesus **was buried** on a Friday, he **was raised** on a Sunday. Consider how your language counts days and use a phrase that represents the timing properly. Alternate translation: “two days later” (See: **Numbers (p.740)**)

### according to the Scriptures

In Paul’s culture, **according to** was a normal way to introduce a reference to an important text. In this case, Paul does not state exactly which part of **the Scriptures** he has in mind but rather refers to **the Scriptures** as a whole. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express how Paul introduces the quotation with a comparable phrase that indicates that Paul is referring to an important text. Alternate translation: “as can be read in the Scriptures” (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

### on the third day according to the Scriptures

Here, **according to the Scriptures** could modify (1) **he was raised on the third day**. Alternate translation: “on the third day, which all happened just as the Scriptures record” (2) just **on the third day**. Alternate translation: “on the third day, which was when the Scriptures indicated that it would happen”

## 1 Corinthians 15:5

**he was seen by Cephas, then by the Twelve**

### Connecting Statement:

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form to emphasize the person being **seen** rather than focusing on those who do the “seeing.” Alternate translation: “Cephas and then the Twelve saw him” (See: **Active or Passive** (p.621))

### by the Twelve

Here, **the Twelve** refers to twelve disciples that Jesus specially chose to represent him and to be with him. We know **the Twelve** includes **Cephas**, and it also includes Judas, who betrayed Jesus and killed himself. Paul uses **the Twelve** as a reference to this group in general. He is not excluding Peter or including Judas. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a word or phrase that refers to “the rest of” or “the remaining members of” the **Twelve**. Alternate translation: “by the remaining members of the Twelve” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information** (p.626))

## 1 Corinthians 15:6

### he was seen by more than 500 brothers at once

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form to emphasize the person being **seen** rather than those who do the “seeing.” Alternate translation: “more than 500 brothers at once saw him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### by more than 500 brothers

Although **brothers** is in masculine form, Paul is using it to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “by more than 500 brothers and sisters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### at once

Here, **at once** indicates that all of the **more than 500 brothers** saw Jesus at the same time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **at once** with a word or a phrase that identifies this as one event. Alternate translation: “at the same time” or “simultaneously” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### at once, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep

It may be more natural in your language to refer to the qualification that **some have fallen asleep** before making the main point that **most** of them **remain until now**. If so, you could reverse the order of these two clauses. Alternate translation: “at once. While some have fallen asleep, most of them remain until now” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### remain until now

Here, to **remain until now** refers to being alive until the present moment. Paul means that **most** of the 500 people who saw Jesus are still alive when he is writing this letter. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **remain until now** with a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “continue to live until now” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### have fallen asleep

Here Paul refers to dying as having **fallen asleep**. This is a polite way of referring to something unpleasant. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **fallen asleep** with a different polite way of referring to death or you could state the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “have passed away” or “are dead” (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:7

### he was seen by James, then by all the apostles

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form to emphasize the person being **seen** rather than emphasizing those who do the “seeing.” Alternate translation: “James and then all the apostles saw him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### by all the apostles

Here, **all the apostles** does not refer only to the twelve close followers that Jesus called to follow him. Paul does not clarify exactly whom he means when he refers to **apostles**, but the word probably refers to “the Twelve”, perhaps also **James**, and others. Since Paul does not specify who exactly the **apostles** are, you also should use a general term in your translation. Alternate translation: “by all those who are apostles” or “by all whom Jesus specially chose as his representatives” (See: **When to Keep Information Implicit (p.787)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:8

### last of all

Here, **last of all** identifies Paul's vision of Christ as the **last** one to occur in the list he has been giving. Alternate translation: "more recently than all the others"

### he was seen by me also, as if to a child born at the wrong time

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form to emphasize the person being **seen** rather than the person who does the "seeing." Alternate translation: "I also saw him, as if I were a child born at the wrong time" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### to a child born at the wrong time

Here, **a child born at the wrong time** could refer to: (1) a child whose birth is unexpected because it is too soon. Alternate translation: "to a child born at an unusual time" (2) a child who is born dead. Alternate translation: "to a stillborn child" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### as if to a child born at the wrong time

Paul here compares himself to a **child born at the wrong time**. He may mean: (1) that he saw Christ and became an apostle suddenly or at an unusual time, just like **a child born at the wrong time**. Alternate translation: "which happened suddenly, as if I were a child born at the wrong time" (2) that before Christ appeared to him, he was as powerless and wretched as a **child born at the wrong time**. Alternate translation: "who was as powerless and wretched as a child born at the wrong time" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:9

### I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God

If your language would state the reason before the result, you could move the clause **because I persecuted the church of God** earlier in the sentence. It could give the reason for: (1) **who am not worthy to be called an apostle**. Alternate translation: "I am the least of the apostles, who, because I persecuted the church of God, am not worthy to be called an apostle" (2) the whole sentence. Alternate translation: "because I persecuted the church of God, I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle" (See: **Information Structure (p. 716)**)

### the least

Here, **least** implies **least** in importance and honor. If your readers would not infer that importance and honor are what Paul is **least** in, you could state this explicitly. Alternate translation: "the least important" or "the least valuable" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### to be called

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Since Paul uses the passive to avoid stating who is doing the "calling," you can use a vague or indefinite subject if you must state who does the action. Alternate translation: "for people to call me" or "for them to call me" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### the church of God

Here, **the church of God** refers to everyone who believes in the Messiah. It does not refer to just one **church** or group of believers. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **the church of God** to make it clear that this phrase refers to all believers. Alternate translation: "the churches of God" or "the whole church of God" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:10

### by the grace of God & his grace that {was} in me & the grace of God

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **grace**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “give” or an adjective such as “gracious.” Alternate translation: “because God acted graciously to me, ... the fact that he acted graciously to me ... God acted graciously” or “by what God gave me ... what he gave me that was in me ... what God gave to me” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### what I am

Here Paul does not state what **I am**. However, the previous verse implies that he is an “apostle” (15:9). If your readers would not make this inference, you could state it explicitly. Alternate translation: “what I am, that is, an apostle” or “an apostle” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### was not in vain. Instead

Here Paul uses a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that means the opposite of the intended meaning. If this is confusing in your language, you can express the meaning positively. If you do, you will need to change the contrast word **Instead** into a support word or phrase such as “in fact” or “indeed.” Alternate translation: “was effective. Indeed” (See: **Litotes (p.724)**)

### in vain

Here, **in vain** identifies a cause that does not have its intended effect. In this case, God’s **grace** would be **in vain** if it did not lead Paul to “labor” or if no one believed Paul’s message. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in vain** with a word or phrase that identifies a cause that does not have its intended effect. Alternate translation: “for nothing” or “to no purpose” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### all of them

Here, **them** refers back to the “apostles” that Paul mentions in the previous verse (15:9). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this reference by referring explicitly to “apostles” here. Alternate translation: “all of the apostles” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### yet not I, but the grace of God with me

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them explicitly in the previous clause (**I labored**). If your language does need these words, you could supply them from that clause. Alternate translation: “yet it was not I who labored, but the grace of God labored with me” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### yet not I, but the grace of God with me

If your language would not naturally state the negative before the positive, you could reverse the order of the **not** statement and the **but** statement. Alternate translation: “although it was really the grace of God with me, not I” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)



## the grace of God with me

Here Paul describes God's action in **grace** as simply **the grace of God**. If your readers would not understand that **the grace of God** identifies God himself acting in **grace**, you could express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "God in grace with me" (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:11

### whether I or they

Here Paul introduces **I** and **they** without a verb. He does this to identify whom he means when he uses **we** later in the verse. If your language needs a verb in this situation, you could use a verb that introduces or brings up characters or ideas. Alternate translation: “whether we are talking about me or them” or “whether we are referring to me or to them” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### they

Here, just as in [15:10](#), **they** refers back to the “apostles” that Paul mentions in [15:9](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this reference by referring explicitly to “apostles” here. Alternate translation: “other apostles” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### in this way we preach, and in this way you believed

In both places, **in this way** could refer to: (1) the gospel as Paul has outlined it in [15:3–8](#). Alternate translation: “it is this gospel that we preach, and it is this gospel that you believed” (2) the “grace” that Paul discussed in the last verse ([15:10](#)). Alternate translation: “by God’s grace we preach, and by God’s grace you believed” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### we preach

Here, **we** refers to **I** and **they** earlier in the sentence. It includes Paul and other apostles but not the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.685)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:12

### if

Paul is speaking as if this was 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 think that what Paul is saying is not certain, then you can introduce the clause with a word such as “since” or “because.” Alternate translation: “since” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.648)**)

### if Christ is proclaimed, that he was raised from the dead

Alternate translation: “if it is proclaimed that Christ was raised from the dead”

### Christ is proclaimed

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that anyone who preaches the gospel does it, particularly he and other “apostles.” Alternate translation: “we proclaim Christ, specifically” or “believing preachers proclaim Christ, specifically” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### he was raised

Here, **raised** refers to someone who died and comes back to life. If your language does not use **raised** to describe coming back to life, you can use a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “he was restored to life” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### he was raised

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive here to focus on Jesus, who **was raised**, rather than focusing on the one doing the “raising.” If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that “God” did it. Alternate translation: “God raised him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### from the dead, & of the dead

Paul is using the adjective **dead** as a noun in order to refer to all people who are **dead**. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: “from among the dead people ... of the dead people” or “from the corpses ... of the corpses” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The implied answer to the question is “that cannot be true.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question by using a word or phrase that indicates that Paul is shocked that they are saying this or that it is contradictory to say this. Alternate translation, as a statement: “I am amazed that some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead.” or “it does not make sense for some among you to say that there is no resurrection of the dead.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## **there is no resurrection of the dead**

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **resurrection**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “resurrect” or “live again.” Alternate translation: “the dead will not resurrect” or “the dead will not be restored to life” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:13

### if there is no resurrection of the dead

Here, **there is no resurrection of the dead** repeats the words found at the end of the last verse (15:12). Paul repeats these words to make what he is arguing very clear. If your readers do not need these words to be repeated, and if they would be confused about why Paul is repeating himself, you could refer back to the words in the previous verse with a short phrase. Alternate translation: “if that were true”

### if there is no resurrection of the dead

Here Paul is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he is already convinced that the condition is not true. He knows that there really is a **resurrection of the dead**. He uses this form to show the Corinthians the implications of their claim that “there is no resurrection of the dead” (See: 15:12). Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: “if there actually were no resurrection of the dead” (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

### there is no resurrection of the dead

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **resurrection**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “resurrect” or “live again.” Alternate translation: “the dead will not resurrect” or “the dead will not be restored to life” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### of the dead

Paul is using the adjective **dead** as a noun in order to refer to all people who are **dead**. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: “of the dead people” or “of the corpses” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### not even Christ has been raised

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive here to focus on Jesus, who was **raised**, rather than focusing on the one doing the “raising.” If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that “God” did it. Alternate translation: “God has not raised even Christ” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:14

### if Christ has not been raised

Here, **Christ has not been raised** repeats words found at the end of the last verse (15:13). Paul repeats these words to make what he is arguing very clear. If your readers do not need these words to be repeated, and if they would be confused about why Paul is repeating himself, you could refer back to the words in the previous verse with a short phrase. Alternate translation: “if that were true”

### if Christ has not been raised

Here Paul is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he is already convinced that the condition is not true. He knows that **Christ** really has **been raised**. He uses this form to continue to show the Corinthians the implications of their claim about resurrection. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: “if Christ has not actually been raised” (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

### Christ has not been raised

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive here to focus on Jesus, who was **raised**, rather than focusing on the one doing the “raising.” If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that “God” did it. Alternate translation: “God has not raised Christ” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### our preaching {is} in vain, and your faith {is} in vain

Here Paul repeats **in vain** and the same structure in two straight clauses. This was worded powerfully in his culture. If it would be helpful in your language, and if it would not be worded powerfully in your culture, you could indicate why Paul repeats words and structure by eliminate some or all of the repetition and by making the statements powerful in another way. Alternate translation: “our preaching and your faith are all in vain” (See: **Parallelism (p.745)**)

### our

Here, **our** refers to Paul and the other apostles mentioned in earlier verses (See: 15:11). It does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.685)**)

### our preaching {is} in vain, and your faith {is} in vain

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **preaching** and **faith**, you can express the ideas by using verbs such as “preach” and “believe.” Alternate translation: “we preached in vain, and you believed in vain” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### is} in vain, & is} in vain

Here, **in vain** identifies a cause that does not have its intended effect. In this case, the apostles’ **preaching** and the Corinthians’ **faith** would not lead to salvation **if Christ has not been raised**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in vain** with a word or phrase that identifies a cause that does not have its intended effect. Alternate translation: “is useless ... is useless” or “has no meaning ... has no meaning” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:15

**we are found to be**

### Connecting Statement:

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on who **are found** rather than focusing on the person doing the “finding.” If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: “they would find us to be” or “people would find us to be” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

**we are found to be**

### Connecting Statement:

Here, **we are found** indicates that other people realize or find out something about “us.” The phrase emphasizes the status of the subject (**we**) more than the action of others in finding that status out. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **we are found to be** with a word or phrase that refers to status. Alternate translation: “it is clear that we are” or “everyone would know that we are” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

**we are found to be & we testified**

### Connecting Statement:

Here, just as “our” did in [15:14](#), **we** refers to Paul and the other apostles mentioned in earlier verses (See: [15:11](#)). It does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.685)**)

**false witnesses of God**

Here Paul uses the possessive form to indicate that he and other apostles would be **false witnesses** who say false things about **God**. If your language does not use this form to express that idea, you can express the idea by using a word such as “about” or by using a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: “false witnesses concerning God” or “falsely testifying about God” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

**concerning God**

Here, **concerning God** could indicate: (1) that **God** is a person about whom **we testified**. Alternate translation: “about God” (2) that **we testified** against **God** by saying he did something that he did not do. Alternate translation: “against God” (3) that **God** is the authority by which **we testified**. Alternate translation: “by God” or “by God’s authority” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## if then the dead are not raised

Here Paul is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he is already convinced that the condition is not true. He knows that **the dead** really are **raised**. He uses this form to continue to show the Corinthians the implications of their claim about resurrection. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: “if then the dead actually are not raised” (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

## the dead are not raised

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on who **are** or **are not raised** rather than focusing on the person doing the “raising.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God does not raise the dead” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## the dead

Paul is using the adjective **dead** as a noun in order to refer to all people who are **dead**. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: “the dead people” or “the corpses” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)



## 1 Corinthians 15:16

### For

Here, **For** introduces again (See: 15:13) Paul's proof that Christ was not raised if it is true that **the dead are not raised**. He reintroduces this proof because he stated at the end of the last verse that God did not raise Christ if the dead are not raised (See: 15:15). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **For** with a word or phrase that introduces a proof. Alternate translation: "That is true because," (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship** (p.655))

### the dead are not raised

Here, **the dead are not raised** repeats the words found at the end of the last verse (15:15). Paul repeats these words to make what he is arguing very clear. If your readers do not need these words to be repeated, and if they would be confused about why Paul is repeating himself, you could refer back to the words in the previous verse with a short phrase. Alternate translation: "that were true"

### if the dead are not raised

Here Paul is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he is already convinced that the condition is not true. He knows that **the dead** really are **raised**. He uses this form to continue to show the Corinthians the implications of their claim about resurrection. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: "if the dead actually are not raised" (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions** (p.641))

### the dead

Paul is using the adjective **dead** as a noun in order to refer to all people who are **dead**. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "the dead people" or "the corpses" (See: **Nominal Adjectives** (p.738))

### the dead are not raised

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on who **are** or **are not raised** rather than focusing on the person doing the "raising." If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that "God" does it. Alternate translation: "God does not raise the dead" (See: **Active or Passive** (p.621))

### not even Christ has been raised

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive here to focus on **Christ**, who has or has not **been raised**, rather than focusing on the one doing the "raising." If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that "God" did it. Alternate translation: "God has not raised even Christ" (See: **Active or Passive** (p.621))

## 1 Corinthians 15:17

### Christ has not been raised

Here, **Christ has not been raised** repeats words found at the end of the last verse (15:16). Paul repeats these words to make what he is arguing very clear. If your readers do not need these words to be repeated, and if they would be confused about why Paul is repeating himself, you could refer back to the words in the previous verse with a short phrase. Alternate translation: “that were true”

### if Christ has not been raised

Here Paul is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he is already convinced that the condition is not true. He knows that **Christ** really has **been raised**. He uses this form to continue to show the Corinthians the implications of their claim about resurrection. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: “if Christ has not actually been raised” (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

### Christ has not been raised

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive here to focus on **Christ**, who has or has not **been raised**, rather than focusing on the one doing the “raising.” If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that “God” did it. Alternate translation: “God has not raised Christ” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### your faith {is} in vain

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **faith**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “believe” or “trust.” Paul implies that they have **faith** in the gospel, in God, or in both. Alternate translation: “you are trusting in vain” or “you believed God in vain” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### is} in vain

Here, as in 15:14, **in vain** identifies a cause that does not have its intended effect. In this case, the Corinthians’ **faith** would not lead to salvation **if Christ has not been raised**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in vain** with a word or phrase that identifies a cause that does not have its intended effect. Alternate translation: “is useless” or “has no meaning” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### you are still in your sins

Here Paul speaks as if **your sins** were something that a person could be **in**. By speaking in this way, he indicates that the **sins** characterize the person’s life or even control the person’s life. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in your sins** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “your sins still rule over you” or “you are still guilty of your sins” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### you are still in your sins

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **sins**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “sin.” Alternate translation: “you are still people who sin” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:18

### Then also

Here, **then also** introduces another inference from the conditional statement “if Christ has not been raised” in [15:17](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that **then also** connects to the beginning of the previous verse by restating the premise from that verse. Alternate translation: “Again, if Christ has not been raised, then” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### the ones having fallen asleep

Paul is referring to people who have died as **the ones having fallen asleep**. This is a polite way of referring to something unpleasant. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the ones having fallen asleep** with a different polite way of referring to those who have died, or you could express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “those who have passed away” or “those who are dead” (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

### in Christ

Here Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in Christ** to describe the union of believers with Christ. In this case, being **in Christ**, or united to Christ, identifies **the ones having fallen asleep** as those who have believed **in Christ**. Alternate translation: “who believed in Christ” or “who are believers” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### perished

Here, **have perished** could indicate that **the ones having fallen asleep in Christ**: (1) will not live again, or will cease to exist. Alternate translation: “have been destroyed” or “are gone” (2) are not saved. Alternate translation: “have not been saved” or “are lost” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:19

### If only in this life we have hope in Christ

Here Paul is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he is already convinced that the condition is not true. He knows that it is not **only in this life** that we **have hope in Christ**, since we also **have hope** for a new life. He uses this form to continue to show the Corinthians the implications of their claim about resurrection. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: "If only in this life did we actually have hope in Christ" (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

### If only in this life we have hope

Here, **only** could modify: (1) **in this life**. Alternate translation: "If it is only in this life that we have hope" (2) **we have hope**. Alternate translation: "If in this life we only have hope" (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### in this life

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **life**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "live." Alternate translation: "while we are currently living do" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### have hope

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **hope**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "hope." Alternate translation: "can we hope" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### of all people we are most pitiful

Here Paul mentions a comparison (**of all people**) before he states his main point. He does this to emphasize the comparison. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate why Paul mentions the comparison first by rearranging the clauses and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "we are more pitiful than every other person" (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### most pitiful

Here, **pitiful** identifies someone whom others "pity" or feel sorry for. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **pitiful** with a word or phrase that refers to someone whom others feel sorry for. Alternate translation: "the ones whom others feel bad for the most" or "the ones whom others should mourn with the most" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:20

### But now

Here, **But now** introduces what is true in contrast with the false situations Paul has discussed in the previous verses (15:13–19). The word **now** does not refer to time here, but introduces his conclusion. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **But now** with a word or phrase that introduces reality in contrast to what is not true. Alternate translation: “In reality, though,” or “As it really is,” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

### Christ has been raised

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive here to focus on **Christ**, who was **raised**, rather than focusing on the one doing the “raising.” If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that “God” did it. Alternate translation: “God raised Christ” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### the dead

Paul is using the adjective **dead** as a noun in order to refer to people who are **dead**. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: “the dead people” or “the corpses” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### the firstfruits of the ones having fallen asleep

Here, **firstfruits** refers to what farmers first gathered from their fields. Often, these **firstfruits** were offered to God to thank him for providing food. What Paul emphasizes here is that **firstfruits** implies that there will be more “fruits”, that is, crops or produce. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that Paul uses **firstfruits** to emphasize that Jesus’ resurrection implies more resurrections with an analogy or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “and he is like the firstfruits, since his resurrection means that more of those who have fallen asleep will be raised” or “the guarantee that those who have fallen asleep will be raised” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### of the ones having fallen asleep

Here Paul is referring to people who have died as **the ones having fallen asleep**. This is a polite way of referring to something unpleasant. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the ones having fallen asleep** with a different polite way of referring to those who have died, or you could express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “those who have passed away” or “those who are dead” (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:21

### since

Here, **since** introduces a logical statement about how things work. Paul assumes that everyone agrees that **death {is} by a man**. His point is that, **since** things work that way, **by a man also resurrection of the dead**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **since** with a word or phrase that introduces this kind of logical connection. Alternate translation: “since we know that” or “because it is true that” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### death {is} by a man

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **death**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “die.” Alternate translation: “everyone dies by a man” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### is} by a man, by a man also

Here, the first **man** that Paul refers to would be “Adam,” the first man. When Adam sinned, **death** became a part of human life (See: especially [Genesis 3:17–19](#)). The second **man** that Paul refers to is Christ, whose resurrection guarantees and begins the **resurrection of the dead**. However, since Paul explains this in the next verse ([15:22](#)), if possible do not include this information here. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **a man** to make it clear that a specific **man** is in view in both cases. Alternate translation: “is by a specific man, by a specific man also” (See: **When to Keep Information Implicit (p.787)**)

### death {is} by a man, by a man also resurrection

In both clauses, Paul omits the verb **{is}** because the Corinthians would infer it. If your readers would not infer this verb, you could include it in the first clause (as the ULT does) or in both clauses. Alternate translation: “death is by a man, by a man also is the resurrection” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### resurrection of the dead

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **resurrection**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “resurrect” or “live again.” Alternate translation: “the dead will resurrect” or “the dead will be restored to life” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### of the dead

Paul is using the adjective **dead** as a noun in order to refer to all people who are **dead**. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: “of the dead people” or “of the corpses” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:22

### in Adam & in Christ

Here Paul uses the spatial metaphors **in Adam** and **in Christ** to describe the union of people with **Adam** and **Christ**. Paul does not specify how this union occurs, but what is clear is that those who are united to **Adam** will **die**, while those who are united to **Christ** will **be made alive**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “those who are related to Adam ... those who are related to Christ” or “in union with Adam ... in union with Christ” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### die

Here Paul uses the present tense of **die** to indicate what is generally true. If your language does not use the present tense for what is generally true, you can use whatever tense is most natural. Alternate translation: “will die” (See: **Predictive Past (p.754)**)

### all will be made alive

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive here to focus on **all**, who **will be made alive**, rather than focusing on the one making them **alive**. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God will make all alive” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### all

Here, **all** contrasts with the **all** who are **in Adam** earlier in the sentence. Paul is not trying to argue about how many people **will be made alive again**. Rather he is contrasting how **all** who are **in Adam** end up dying, while **all** who are **in Christ** end up being **made alive**. If your readers would think that Paul is making a claim about how many people are **made alive**, you could use a word or phrase that identifies **all** as those who are **in Christ**. Alternate translation: “all who believe in him” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:23

### But each in his own order: Christ

Here, **in his own order** identifies that things happen in a specific sequence or in turn. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in his own order** with a word or phrase that does introduce a sequence. Alternate translation: “But these things happen in sequence: first, Christ” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### each in his own order

Here Paul omits some words that your language may need to make a complete thought. The Corinthians would have understood him to mean that, first, **each** is made alive **in his own order**. If your readers would not make this inference, you could include these words. Alternate translation: “each will be made alive in his own order” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### in his own

Although **his** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **his** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “in his or her own” or “in their own” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### Christ the firstfruits

Here, just as in [15:20](#), **firstfruits** refers to what farmers first gathered from their fields. Often, these **firstfruits** were offered to God to thank him for providing food. What Paul emphasizes here is that **firstfruits** implies that there will be more “fruits”, that is, crops or produce. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that Paul uses **firstfruits** to emphasize that Jesus’ resurrection implies that there will be more resurrections with an analogy or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “Christ, who is like the firstfruits” or “the guarantee” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### at his coming

Here, **his coming** refers specifically to Jesus “coming back” to earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **at his coming** with a phrase that more clearly refers to Jesus’ “second coming.” Alternate translation: “when he comes again” or “at his return” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### the ones of Christ

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **the ones** who belong to or believe in **Christ**. If your language does not use that form for this meaning, you can express the idea with a phrase such as “belong to” or “believe in.” Alternate translation: “those who believe in Christ” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### Then {will be

## General Information:

\In verse [15:24](#), **Then** introduces events that occur after the “coming” in the last verse ([15:23](#)). Paul does not clarify how soon after the “coming” these events will happen. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express



**Then** with a word or phrase that more clearly identifies events happening in sequence. Alternate translation: “Next will be” (See: **Connect — Sequential Time Relationship (p.658)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:24

### the end

Here, **the end** identifies that something has reached its goal and thus ended. Paul does not state explicitly what **end** he has in mind, but the Corinthians would have inferred that he meant **the end** of the world as it currently exists. This does not mean that there will be no more world, but it means that things will be very different after **the end**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind what **end** Paul is speaking about explicitly. Alternate translation: “the end of this world” or “the end of the way things are now” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### when he hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when he has abolished all rule and all authority and power

Here, **when he has abolished** will occur before **when he hands over**. In Paul’s language, the sequence is clear even though the events are not in order. If your language would put the events in order, you could rearrange these two clauses to make the sequence clearer. Alternate translation: “when he has abolished all rule and all authority and power, when he hands over the kingdom to the God and Father” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### he hands over & he has abolished

Here, **he** refers to “Christ.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express to whom **he** refers with “Christ” in one or both of these places. Alternate translation: “Christ hands over ... Christ has abolished” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### to the God and Father

Here, **God** and **Father** are two names for the same person. The name **Father** makes it clear that Paul is speaking about “God the Father” to distinguish him from “God the Son,” who is the one who **hands over the kingdom**. Use a word or phrase here that clearly names “God the Father.” Alternate translation: “God the Father” (See: **Translating Son and Father (p.783)**)

### he has abolished

Here, **abolished** refers to making someone or something ineffective or no longer in control. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **abolished** with a word or phrase that indicates that the Messiah has conquered or made something ineffective. Alternate translation: “he has overcome” or “he has put an end to” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### all rule and all authority and power

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **rule**, **authority**, and **power**, you can express the idea by using verbs such as “rule,” “govern,” and “control.” Paul is speaking here about the position or ability to have **rule** and **authority** and **power**, so you can refer to the position or ability itself, or you can refer to the person or thing that fills that position or has that ability. Alternate translation: “all ruling and all governing and controlling” or “all those who rule and all those who govern and control” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## all rule and all authority and power

Here, **rule**, **authority**, and **power** could identify: (1) any position or person that has **rule**, **authority**, and **power**. Alternate translation: “all positions of rule and all positions of authority and power” (2) powerful spiritual beings that have **rule**, **authority**, and **power** or that are called “rules,” “authorities,” and “powers.” Alternate translation: “all the powerful spiritual beings that exercise rule and authority and power” or “all spiritual beings and all angels and archangels” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## all rule and all authority and power

Here Paul includes **all** with the first two items in the list but not with the third item. He does this to connect the last two items together, which means that **all** modifies both **authority** and **power**. If you can group the last two items closely together, you could do so here. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express why Paul uses **all** with only two of the three items with one **all** to modify the whole list, or you could repeat **all** with each item. Alternate translation: “all rule and authority and power” or “all rule and all authority and all power”

## 1 Corinthians 15:25

### For

Here, **For** introduces Paul's explanation of how Christ "abolishes all rule and all authority and power" (15:24). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **For** with a word or phrase that introduces further explanation. Alternate translation: "Specifically," (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### he must reign

Here Paul does not explain why Christ **must** reign. He implies that it is because this is what God the Father has decided. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind what **must** implies explicitly. Alternate translation: "God chose that Christ will reign" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p. 626)**)

### until he has put all the enemies under his feet

Here Paul speaks as if Christ will one day stand on or rest **his feet** on **the enemies**. In Paul's culture, kings or generals might stand on or put their feet on leaders that they conquered. This showed that these leaders were indeed conquered and had to submit to the king or general who conquered them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **put all the enemies under his feet** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "until he has subdued all his enemies" or "until he has conquered all his enemies and put them under his feet" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### he has put

Every **he** and **his** in this verse refers to Christ except for perhaps this one. Here, **he** could refer to: (1) Christ, who puts his own **enemies under his feet**. Alternate translation: "he himself has put" (2) God (the Father), who puts **enemies under Christ's feet**. Alternate translation: "God has put" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### the enemies

Here, **the enemies** refers most specifically to the enemies of Christ, but it may also include the enemies of believers. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that **the enemies** refers to the **enemies** of Christ and his people with an appropriate possessive form here. Alternate translation: "his enemies" or "his and believers' enemies" (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:26

### The last enemy to be abolished: death

Here Paul speaks about **death** as if it were a person who was an **enemy** of Christ and believers. By speaking in this way, Paul identifies the fact that people die as something that does not fit with Christ's full rule. If it would be helpful in your language, you could describe more generally how **death** is in opposition to Christ and believers. Alternate translation: "the last thing that defies Christ to be abolished: death" (See: **Personification (p.748)**)

### The last enemy to be abolished

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form to emphasize the **enemy** that is **abolished** more than the person doing the "abolishing." If you must state who did the action, Paul implies that "Christ" did it. Alternate translation: "The last enemy that Christ will abolish" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### to be abolished: death

In this sentence, Paul does not use a main verb. He uses this form to emphasize **death** as the **last enemy**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **death** to include a verb such as "is" and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "to be abolished is death" or "to be abolished is this: death" (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### to be abolished

Here, **abolished** refers to making someone or something ineffective or no longer in control. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **abolished** with a word or phrase that indicates that the Messiah has conquered or made something ineffective. Alternate translation: "to be overcome" or "to be nullified" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### death

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **death**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "die." Alternate translation: "that people die" or "the fact that people die" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

# 1 Corinthians 15:27

## For

In Paul's culture, **For** is a normal way to introduce a quotation from an important text, in this case, the Old Testament book titled "Psalms" (See: (Psalm 8:6)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable phrase that indicates that Paul is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: "For it can be read in the Old Testament," or "For in the book of Psalms we can read," (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

## For "he has put everything under his feet

If you do not use this form in your language, you could translate this statement as an indirect quote instead of as a direct quote. Alternate translation: "For it says that he has put everything under his feet" (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

## he has put everything under his feet." & he has put everything

Just as in 15:25, Paul speaks as if Christ will one day stand on or rest his feet on the enemies. In Paul's culture, kings or generals might stand on or put their feet on leaders that they conquered. This showed that these leaders were conquered and had to submit to the king or general who conquered them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **put everything under his feet** with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "he has subdued all his enemies to him ... he has subdued" or "until he has conquered all his enemies and put them under his feet ... he has conquered and put" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## he has put everything under his feet." & he has put

Here, **his** refers to Christ, and **he** refers to God the Father. Paul himself distinguishes between **he** and **his** later on in the verse, so if possible, leave the referents of **he** and **his** unstated. If you must state the referents, you could use "God" and "Christ." Alternate translation: "God has put everything under Christ's feet ... God has put" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## when it says

In Paul's culture, **when it says** is a normal way to refer back to a text that has already been mentioned. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable phrase that indicates that Paul is referring back to what he just said. Alternate translation: "when the quote reads," or "when we see in the quote the words," (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

## it says, "he has put everything

If you do not use this form in your language, you could translate this statement as an indirect quote instead of as a direct quote. Make sure that it is clear that Paul is repeating **he has put everything** from the previous quote so that he can comment on it. Alternate translation: "it says that he has put everything" (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

## it is} clear that

Here, **{it is} clear** indicates that someone is pointing out something that is or should be obvious. In other words, the author does not need to argue for what is **clear** and can instead just point it out. If it would be helpful in your

language, you could express **{it is} clear** with a comparable word or phrase that introduces something obvious. Alternate translation: “you could tell that” or “it is obvious that” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## **the one having put everything in subjection to him**

Here the Corinthians would have known that **the one having put everything** is God the Father. If your readers would not make this inference, you could include an explicit reference to “God.” Alternate translation: “the one who put everything in subjection to him, that is, God,” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## **is} excepted**

Here, **excepted** identifies something as an “exception” to a general rule or statement. Here Paul means that **the one having put everything** is not included in **everything**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **{is} excepted** with a word or phrase that identifies an exception. Alternate translation: “is not included” or “is not subjected” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:28

### all the things have been subjected

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive here to focus on **all things** that are **subjected**, rather than focusing on the one doing the “subjecting.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God has subjected all things” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### the Son

Paul here refers to God **the Son** as opposed to God “the Father,” whom he referred to in [15:24](#). Use a translation that clearly refers to God **the Son**. Alternate translation: “God’s Son” (See: **Translating Son and Father (p.783)**)

### the Son himself will also be subjected

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive here to focus on **the Son** who is **subjected**, rather than focusing on the one doing the “subjecting.” If you must state who does the action, Paul could imply that: (1) the **Son** does it to himself. Alternate translation: “the Son will also subject himself” (2) “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God will subject the Son himself also” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### the Son himself

Here, **himself** focuses attention on **the Son** and emphasizes that **the Son** is the one doing this. If **himself** would not draw attention to **the Son** in your language, you could express the attention or focus in another way. Alternate translation: “even the Son” or “the Son indeed” (See: **Reflexive Pronouns (p.763)**)

### to the one having subjected all the things to him

Here, just as in [15:27](#), the Corinthians would have known that **the one having subjected all things** is God the Father. If your readers would not make this inference, you could include an explicit reference to “God.” Alternate translation: “to the one who subjected all things to him, that is, God,” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### God

Here, **God** could refer to: (1) **God** the Father specifically. Alternate translation: “God the Father” (2) all three persons that are **God**. Alternate translation: “the Trinity” or “the trinitarian God”

### all in all

Here, **all in all** is a phrase that emphasizes that **God** rules and controls everything that exists. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **all in all** with a comparable phrase that refers to how **God** rules and controls **all things**. Alternate translation: “supreme” or “the one who rules all things” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)



# 1 Corinthians 15:29

## Otherwise

Here, **Otherwise** introduces the opposite of what Paul has argued in 15:12–28. If what he has argued about Jesus' resurrection and its importance is not true, then what he says in this verse must be true. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Otherwise** with a word or phrase that introduces an opposite or contrast. Alternate translation: "If all that is not true" (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

## what will the ones being baptized for the dead do

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The implied answer to the question is "They will accomplish nothing." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question by using a strong negation. Alternate translation: "those who are baptized for the dead do nothing." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## will the ones being baptized & do

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are getting **baptized** rather than focusing on the person doing the "baptizing." If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: "will those do whom others baptize" or "will those do who receive baptism" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## will the ones being baptized for the dead do

Here Paul speaks of "doing" something in the future. He could be referring to: (1) the intended result of being **baptized**, which happens after the baptism. Alternate translation: "will those accomplish who are baptized" (2) what the people **being baptized** think that they are doing. Alternate translation: "do those who are baptized for the dead think that they are doing" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## will the ones being baptized for the dead do? & are they baptized for them

It is unclear what **being baptized for the dead** actually means and what kind of practice it refers to. What is clear is that the practice only makes sense if one believes that **the dead** are **raised**. If possible, express these phrases in general terms. Two of the most common ways to understand **being baptized for the dead** are that it could refer to: (1) the practice of living believers receiving baptism in place of people who died without being baptized. Alternate translation: "will those do who are baptized in place of the dead ... are they baptized in their place" (2) people receiving baptism because they believe that the **dead** will "rise." They could be expecting their own resurrection or the resurrection of people they knew who are **dead**. Alternate translation: "will those do who are baptized with the dead in mind ... are they baptized with them in mind" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## the dead & the dead

Paul is using the adjective **dead** as a noun in order to refer to all people who are **dead**. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "the dead people ... the dead people" or "the corpses ... the corpses" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

## If the dead are not raised at all

Here Paul is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he is already convinced that the condition is not true. He knows that **the dead** really are **raised**. He uses this form to show the Corinthians the implications of their claim that **the dead are not raised**. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: “if the dead actually are not raised at all” (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

## the dead are not raised

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are or **are not raised** rather than focusing on the person doing the raising. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God does not raise the dead” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## why then are they baptized for them

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The implied answer to the question is “There is no reason why.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question by using a strong negation. Alternate translation: “they are baptized for them for nothing.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## are they baptized

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are getting **baptized** rather than focusing on the person doing the “baptizing.” If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: “do others baptize them” or “do they receive baptism” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## are they baptized for them

Here, **they** refers to the people **being baptized for the dead**, while **them** refers to **the dead**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state explicitly what people these pronouns refer to. Alternate translation: “are these people baptized for the dead” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:30

### Why also

Here, **Why also** introduces another response to the condition “If the dead are not raised at all” in [15:29](#). Use a word or phrase that clearly connects this question back to that condition. Alternate translation: “Again, if that is true, why” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### Why also are we in danger every hour

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The implied answer to the question is “There is no reason why.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question by using a strong affirmation. Alternate translation: “We also are in danger every hour for nothing.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### we

Here, **we** refers to Paul and other apostles who preach the gospel. It does not include the Corinthians. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.685)**)

### are we in danger every hour

Here Paul says that **we** are **in danger** because of the work that he and others do to proclaim the gospel. If your readers would not infer that this is why Paul and others are **in danger**, you could express the idea explicitly. Alternate translation: “are we in danger every hour on account of the gospel” or “are we in danger every hour because we proclaim the good news” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### are we in danger

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **danger**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “endanger” or an adverb such as “dangerously.” Alternate translation: “do we live dangerously” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### every hour

Here, **every hour** identifies an action as frequent or consistent. It does not mean that Paul and others experienced **danger** once **every hour**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **every hour** with a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “all the time” or “very often” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:31

### I die every day

Here Paul speaks as if he “dies” **every day**. Paul does not experience death every single day, but he speaks in this way to emphasize that he could **die** at many different times. He speaks in this way to emphasize how often he experiences danger and risks losing his life. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **I die every day** plainly and include the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “I face death all the time” or “I am in danger of dying very often” (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

### by the boasting in you

Here, **by** introduces a person or thing that a person swears **by** to prove the truth of a claim. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **by** with a word or phrase that introduces an oath or a strong claim to truth. Alternate translation: “which is as true as the boasting in you” or “which I promise is as true as the boasting in you”

### the boasting in you

Alternate translation: “my boasting about you”

### brothers

Although **brothers** is in masculine form, Paul is using it to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “brothers and sisters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### in Christ Jesus our Lord

Here Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in Christ Jesus our Lord** to describe the union of believers with Christ. In this case, being **in Christ**, or united to Christ, identifies Paul’s **boasting** as something that only matters or is valid in his union with Christ. Alternate translation: “in union with Christ Jesus our Lord” or “because I am united to Christ Jesus our Lord” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:32

### What {is} the profit to me, according to men, if I fought wild beasts at Ephesus

Paul does not ask this question because he is looking for information. Rather, he asks it to involve the Corinthians in what he is arguing. The implied answer to the question is “There is no profit.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this question by using a strong affirmation. Alternate translation: “There is no profit to me, according to men, if I fought wild beasts at Ephesus.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

### What {is} the profit to me

Here, **the profit to me** refers to something that is good for Paul. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the profit to me** with a comparable word or phrase that refers to something that is good or beneficial for someone. Alternate translation: “What good is it to me” or “How does it benefit me” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### according to men, if I fought wild beasts

Here, **according to men** could modify: (1) **I fought**. In this case, Paul would be fighting with merely human goals and strategies. Alternate translation: “if I fought according to men against wild beasts” (2) **wild beasts**. In this case, Paul would be identifying the phrase **wild beasts** as a figurative reference to his enemies. Alternate translation: “if I fought wild beasts, speaking,” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### according to men

Here, **according to men** identifies thinking or acting in only human ways. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **according to men** by using a word or phrase that refers to what people who do not believe say and argue. Alternate translation: “according to what mere humans think” or “according to this world” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### men

Although **men** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **men** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “humans” or “men and women” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### if

Paul is speaking as if fighting **wild beasts** was a hypothetical possibility, but he means that it actually happened. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, and if your readers might think that what Paul is saying did not happen, then you can introduce the clause with a word such as “when.” Alternate translation: “when” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.648)**)

### I fought wild beasts

Here, the **wild beasts** could be: (1) a figurative reference to enemies, who acted like **wild beasts**. In support of this is the fact that, except for this verse, the Bible does not talk about Paul fighting **wild beasts**. Alternate translation: “I fought savage enemies” or “I strove with opponents as fierce as wild beasts” (2) a literal reference to fighting **wild** animals. Alternate translation: “I fought against wild animals” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## at Ephesus

**Ephesus** was a city on the west coast of what is now Turkey. Paul spent time there soon after leaving Corinth (See: [Acts 18:19–21](#)). After some more travels, he visited **Ephesus** and stayed there for more than two years ( [Acts 19:1–20:1](#)). Neither story mentions **wild beasts**, and Paul does not clarify which visit he is speaking about. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Ephesus** with a word or phrase that more clearly identifies it as a city that Paul visited. Alternate translation: “in Ephesus city” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## if the dead are not raised

Here Paul is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he is already convinced that the condition is not true. He knows that **the dead** really are **raised**. He uses this form to show the Corinthians the implications of their claim that **the dead are not raised**. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: “If the dead actually are not raised” (See: **Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions (p.641)**)

## are not raised, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die

The Corinthians would have recognized “**Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die**” as a common saying. The same words appear in [Isaiah 22:13](#), but the saying may have been used more generally by many people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express how Paul introduces this saying with a comparable phrase that indicates that Paul is referring to a common saying. Alternate translation: “are not raised, as the saying goes, ‘Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die’” (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

## are not raised, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die

If you do not use this form in your language, you could translate the saying as an indirect quote instead of as a direct quote. Make sure that your readers know that Paul is referring to a common saying. Alternate translation: “are not raised, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die, as people say” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

## Let us eat and drink

Here, **Let us eat and drink** refers to lavish or wild eating and drinking. It does not refer to regular meals. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that this phrase refers to partying or wild behavior with a word or phrase that more clearly expresses that idea. Alternate translation: “Let us party” or “Let us feast and get drunk” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## tomorrow we die

Here, **tomorrow** refers to a time that will come soon. It does not necessarily refer to the day after today. The saying uses **tomorrow** to emphasize how soon **we** will **die**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **tomorrow** with a comparable word or phrase that emphasizes a time that will soon arrive. Alternate translation: “soon we die” or “sometime very soon we die” (See: **Hyperbole (p.703)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:33

### Do not be deceived: “Bad company corrupts good morals

The Corinthians would have recognized “**Bad company corrupts good morals**” as a common saying. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express how Paul introduces this saying with a phrase that indicates that Paul is referring to a common saying. Alternate translation: “Do not be deceived. As the saying goes, ‘Bad company corrupts good morals’” (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

### Do not be deceived: “Bad company corrupts good morals

If you do not use this form in your language, you could translate the saying as an indirect quote instead of as a direct quote. Make sure that your readers know that Paul is referring to a common saying. Alternate translation: “Do not be deceived. People say that bad company corrupts good morals” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p. 668)**)

### Do not be deceived

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on those who are **deceived** rather than focusing on the people doing the “deceiving.” If you must state who does the action, you can use a vague or indefinite subject. Alternate translation: “Do not let others deceive you” or “You should not allow people to deceive you” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### Bad company corrupts good morals

In Paul’s culture, this statement was a proverb that many people would have been familiar with. The proverb means that bad friends turn a good person into a bad person. You could translate the proverb in a way that will be recognized as a proverb and be meaningful in your language and culture. Alternate translation: “Bad friends ruin good people” (See: **Proverbs (p.759)**)

### Bad company

Here, **Bad company** refers to a persons’ friends who normally do what is wrong. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Bad company** with a comparable phrase that refers to friends who do what is wrong. Alternate translation: “Wicked companions” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### good morals

Here, **good morals** refers to the character of a person who habitually does what is **good** or right. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **good morals** with a comparable word or phrase that identifies someone with proper or right character. Alternate translation: “those who do what is right” or “upright character” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:34

### Be sober

Here, **Be sober** refers to someone becoming **sober** after they were drunk. Paul speaks in this way to characterize how the Corinthians are acting and thinking as if they were drunk. He wants them to no longer act as if they are in a stupor or asleep and instead be alert and in their right mind. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Be sober** with a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “Be in your right mind” or “Be alert” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### have no knowledge of God

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **knowledge**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “know” or “understand.” Alternate translation: “do not understand who God is” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### I say this to your shame

Here, **I say this to your shame** is Paul’s way of telling the Corinthians that they should feel ashamed about how **some** of them **have no knowledge of God**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this phrase with a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “you should be ashamed about this” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### to your shame

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **shame**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “shame.” Alternate translation: “to shame you” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)



## 1 Corinthians 15:35

**But**

### Connecting Statement:

Here, **But** introduces an objection or at least a problem with what Paul has argued about how God raises the dead. Since **But** introduces a new section of the argument, you could use a word or phrase that introduces a new development in the argument. Alternate translation: "Next," (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.644)**)

**someone will say**

### Connecting Statement:

Here Paul uses the phrase **someone will say** to bring up an objection or a problem with what he has been arguing. He does not have in mind a specific person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **someone will say** with a word or phrase that introduces a counterargument or a problem. Alternate translation: "it may be objected" or "questions may be raised:" (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

**will say, "How are the dead raised, and with what kind of body do they come**

If you do not use this form in your language, you could translate these questions as indirect quotes instead of as direct quotes. Make sure that it is clear that these are questions that are looking for information. Alternate translation: "will ask how the dead are raised and with what kind of body they come." (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

**are the dead raised**

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on who are **raised** rather than focusing on the person doing the "raising." If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that "God" does it. Alternate translation: "does God raise the dead" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

**the dead**

Paul is using the adjective **dead** as a noun in order to refer to all people who are **dead**. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "the dead people" or "the corpses" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

**do they come**

Here, the person asking the question speaks as if **the dead** can **come**. This could refer to: (1) the existence of **the dead**. In other words, **come** would refer to anything that **the dead** do. Alternate translation: "do they do things" or "do they exist" (2) how the believing dead **come** with Christ when he returns to earth. Alternate translation: "do they come with Christ at his return" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:36

### You foolish one! What you sow

Here Paul addresses the person who asked the question in the previous verse (15:35). That person is a hypothetical “someone,” but Paul still addresses the answer to **you** in the singular. (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.690)**)

### You foolish one

Here Paul calls the hypothetical “someone” who asked the questions (15:35) a **foolish one**. He does not mean that the questions are wrong, for he spends many of the next verses answering these questions. Rather, he means that someone who does not know the answers to these questions is **foolish**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **foolish one** with a word or phrase that identifies someone who should know something but does not. Alternate translation: “You silly person” or “You know nothing” (See: **Exclamations (p.683)**)

### What you sow is not caused to live unless it dies

In 15:36–38, Paul speaks about how farmers **sow** seeds as an analogy for understanding how the dead resurrect. In this verse, the point is that seeds have a new kind of “life” after they are buried in the ground and thus “die.” Just like this, humans also have a new kind of “life” after they “die.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this to make it clear that Paul is using an analogy. Alternate translation: “Here is an example: what you sow is not caused to live unless it dies”

### What you sow is not caused to live unless it dies

Here Paul speaks about farming practices that were common in his culture. A farmer would **sow** seeds on the dirt in a field, and the seed would sink into the field and seemingly “die.” Only after a period where it lies “dead” in the ground does the seed **live** in new form as a plant. You could use words or phrases that describe these kinds of farming practices in your culture. Paul specifically uses **live** and **die** to connect the farming practices to human life and death, so if possible use terms that can apply to both humans and seeds. Alternate translation: “The seeds that you plant do not live as plants unless they are first buried in the ground” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### is not caused to live

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on how **What you sow** ends up “living” rather than focusing on what or who causes it **to live**. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” or the plant itself does it. Alternate translation: “God does not cause to live” or “does not begin to live” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### is not caused to live unless it dies

If it would appear in your language that Paul was making a statement here and then contradicting it, you could reword this sentence to avoid using an exception clause. Alternate translation: “only is caused to live once it dies” (See: **Connect — Exception Clauses (p.646)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:37

### what you sow

Here Paul refers to **what you sow** without including a main verb. He does this in order to identify the topic that he is about to comment on. If your language would not introduce a topic in this way, you could include a main verb or use a form that normally introduces a topic in your language. Alternate translation: “while we are speaking about what you sow” or “when you sow” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### what you sow, you do not sow

Here Paul continues to address the person who asked the question in [15:35](#). That person is a hypothetical “someone,” but Paul still addresses the answer to **you** in the singular. (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.690)**)

### you do not sow the body that will be, but a bare seed—perhaps wheat or something else

Here Paul continues to use an analogy from farming. In this verse, he focuses on how the living plant that grows from a seed looks nothing like that seed. The key verbal connection between humans and plants is the word **body**, so if possible use the same word to refer to the human **body** and the **body** of the plant **that will be**. Alternate translation: “you sow only a bare seed, perhaps wheat or something else, not the body of the plant that will grow”

### the body that will be

Here, **the body that will be** identifies the plant that will later grow from the seed. Paul’s point is that one does not **sow** something that looks like the fully grown plant. Rather, one sows **a bare seed**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the body that will be** with a word or phrase that refers to a fully grown plant. If possible, use the same word for **body** that you have used for the human body, since Paul is using **body** to connect what he says about plants with what he is saying about the resurrection. Alternate translation: “the body of a fully grown plant” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### a bare seed

Here, **a bare seed** refers to a seed all by itself, with no leaves or stem like the plant will later have. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **a bare seed** with a word or phrase that identifies that Paul is speaking about a **seed** all by itself. Alternate translation: “only a seed” or “a seed alone” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### perhaps wheat or something else

Here Paul uses **wheat** as an example of a plant that was common in culture and that starts out as a seed. When he says **or something else**, he makes it clear that any kind of plant that begins as a seed works for his analogy. So, you could refer to any common plant in your culture that starts out as a seed. Alternate translation: “perhaps a corn seed or some other kind of seed” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:38

### God gives it a body just as he desires, and to each of the seeds, its own body

Here Paul concludes his analogy about farming. In the last verse he proved that seeds grow into bodies that look nothing like the seeds. Here, he shows that God is one who decides what **body** a seed grows into and that God gives different kinds of “bodies” to different kinds of seeds. Again, the main verbal connection between human resurrection and seeds growing is the word **body**, so if possible use a word for **body** that can apply to both seeds and humans. Alternate translation: “God decides what kind of plant a seed grows into, and each of the seeds grows into its own kind of plant”

#### it

Here, **it** refers back to “a bare seed” in [15:37](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **it** by referring explicitly back to the “seed.” Alternate translation: “the seed” or “that seed” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

#### just as he desires

Here, **just as he desires** means that God has chosen what kind of **body** every seed will grow into, and he does this as he thinks best. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **desires** with a word that refers to what God “decides” or “chooses.” Alternate translation: “in the way that he decides” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

#### to each of the seeds, its own body

Here Paul omits some words that your language may require to make a complete thought. Paul omits these words because he stated them explicitly in the previous clause (**God gives**). If your language does need these words, you could supply them from that clause. Alternate translation: “to each of the seeds God gives its own body” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

#### to each of the seeds

Here, **each of the seeds** could refer to: (1) **each** of the varieties or kinds of **seeds** that exist. Alternate translation: “to each of the seed varieties” (2) **each** individual seed. Alternate translation: “to each individual seed” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:39

### Instead, {there is} one {flesh} of men, and another flesh of animals, and another flesh of birds, and another of fish

Here Paul repeats **flesh of** and the same structure in four consecutive clauses. This was worded powerfully in his culture, and it emphasizes the distinctions between the different kinds of **flesh**. If it would be helpful in your language, and if it would not be worded powerfully in your culture, you could indicate why Paul repeats words and structure by eliminate some or all of the repetition and by making the statements powerful in another way. Alternate translation: "Instead, men, animals, birds, and fish have varying kinds of flesh" (See: **Parallelism (p.745)**)

### one {flesh} of men

Here Paul omits **{flesh}** because he used it in the previous sentence and because he uses it throughout the rest of this sentence. English speakers would misunderstand why Paul omits **{flesh}** here, so the ULT has included it in brackets. Consider whether your readers would also misunderstand why Paul has omitted **{flesh}**. Alternate translation: "one of men" (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### of men

Although **men** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **men** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: "of people" or "of men and women" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### of animals

Here, **animals** refers to living things that are not **men**, **birds**, or **fish** but still count as **animals**. The word often refers particularly to domesticated animals such as sheep, goats, oxen, or horses. Use a word or phrase in your language that refers to this group of beings. Alternate translation: "of domesticated animals" or "of beasts" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:40

### heavenly bodies and earthly bodies

Here, **heavenly bodies** refers to the kinds of things that Paul will mention in the next verse: the sun, moon, and stars (15:41). The **earthly bodies** are the kinds of things Paul mentioned in the previous verse: humans, animals, birds, and fish (15:39). The primary distinction Paul is drawing is a spatial one: some **bodies** exist in “heaven,” and others exist on “earth.” Use words or phrases that naturally draw this distinction in your language. Alternate translation: “superterrestrial bodies and terrestrial bodies” or “bodies in heaven and bodies on earth” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### the glory of the heavenly {is} one, and that of the earthly {is} another

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **glory**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as “glorious” or “splendorous.” Alternate translation: “the heavenly are splendorous in one way, and the earthly are splendorous in another way” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### of the heavenly {& of the earthly

Here Paul omits **bodies** because he stated them explicitly in the previous sentence. If your language needs **bodies** here, you could supply it from the previous sentence. Alternate translation: “of the heavenly bodies ... of the earthly bodies” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### is} one, & is} another

Here Paul is distinguishing between different kinds of **glory**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea explicitly. Alternate translation: “is one kind ... is another kind” or “is of one type ... is of another type” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

# 1 Corinthians 15:41

## There is} one & another & another

Here, just as in 15:40, Paul is distinguishing between different kinds of **glory**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea explicitly. Alternate translation: "There is one kind of ... another kind of ... another kind of" or "There is one type of ... another type of ... another type of" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## There is} one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars. & in glory

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **glory**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as "glorious" or "splendorous." Alternate translation: "The sun is splendorous in one way, and the moon is splendorous in another way, and the stars are splendorous in another way ... in how glorious they are" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## There is} one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars

Here Paul repeats **glory of** and the same structure in three consecutive clauses. This was worded powerfully in his culture, and it emphasizes the distinctions between the different kinds of **glory**. If it would be helpful in your language, and if it would not be worded powerfully in your culture, you could indicate why Paul repeats words and structure by eliminate some or all of the repetition and by making the statements powerful in another way. Alternate translation: "The sun, moon, and stars have varying kinds of glory" (See: **Parallelism (p.745)**)

## For

Here, **For** introduces a further explanation of the **glory of the stars**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **For** with a word or phrase that introduces an explanation or clarification. Alternate translation: "Indeed," or "As a matter of fact," (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

## star differs from star in glory

Alternate translation: "some stars have different kinds of glory than other stars" or "the stars themselves differ in glory"

## 1 Corinthians 15:42

### So also {is

Here, **So also** introduces Paul's explanation of how what he has said in [15:36–41](#) about seeds and bodies applies to **the resurrection of the dead**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **So also** with a word or phrase that introduces the application of an illustration or example. Alternate translation: "It is in these terms that you should think about" or "Let us apply these things to" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### the resurrection of the dead

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **resurrection**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "resurrect" or "live again." Alternate translation: "the way in which the dead will resurrect" or "how the dead will be restored to life" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### of the dead

Paul is using the adjective **dead** as a noun in order to refer to all people who are **dead**. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "of the dead people" or "of the corpses" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### What} is sown in decay

Here Paul speaks as if a dead body were **sown** like a seed. He speaks in this way to connect how a dead body is buried in the ground with how a seed is **sown** in the ground. However, Paul does not continue the metaphor when he talks about how the body **is raised**, since those are his normal words for speaking about resurrection. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **is sown** with a comparable phrase that applies to both seeds and human bodies, or you could express the idea using an analogy. Alternate translation: "The body that is put in the ground in decay, just like a seed," or "What is planted in decay" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### What} is sown in decay is raised

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the body that **is sown** and **raised** rather than focusing on the people who do those actions. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that "people" do the sowing and "God" does the raising. Alternate translation: "What people sow in decay God raises" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### in decay is raised in immortality

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **decay** and **immortality**, you can express the ideas by using verbs such as "decay" or "die." Alternate translation: "while it decays is raised so that it never decays again" or "when it dies is raised in such a way that it never dies" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)



## 1 Corinthians 15:43

### It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power

Here Paul repeats **is sown in**, **is raised in**, and similar structure in three consecutive sentences (See: the end of 15:42). This was worded powerfully in his culture, and it emphasizes the three distinctions between how the body **is sown** and **raised**. If it would be helpful in your language, and if it would not be worded powerfully in your culture, you could indicate why Paul repeats words and structure by eliminate some or all of the repetition and by making the statements powerful in another way. If you use the following alternate translation, you will need to omit "What is sown in decay is raised in immortality" in 15:42, since the alternate translation includes that idea. Alternate translation: "What is sown in dishonorable decay is raised in glorious immortality" or "What is sown in decay, dishonor, and weakness is raised in immortality, glory, and power" (See: **Parallelism (p.745)**)

### It is sown in dishonor; & It is sown in weakness

Here, just as in 15:42, Paul speaks as if a dead body were **sown** like a seed. He speaks in this way to connect how a dead body is buried in the ground to how a seed is **sown** in the ground. However, Paul does not continue the metaphor when he talks about how the body **is raised**, since those are his normal words for speaking about resurrection. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **is sown** with a comparable phrase that applies to both seeds and human bodies, or you could express the idea using an analogy. Alternate translation: "The body is put in the ground in dishonor, just like a seed ... The body is put in the ground in weakness, just like a seed" or "It is planted in dishonor ... It is planted in weakness" (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### It is sown & it is raised & It is sown & it is raised

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the ideas in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the body that **is sown** and **raised** rather than focusing on the people who do those actions. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that "people" do the sowing and "God" does the raising. Alternate translation: "People sow it ... God raises it ... People sow it ... God raises it" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **dishonor** and **glory**, you can express the idea by using adjectives such as "dishonorable" and "glorious." Alternate translation: "A dishonorable body is sown; a glorious body is raised" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **weakness** and **power**, you can express the idea by using adjectives such as "weak" and "powerful." Alternate translation: "A weak body is sown; a powerful body is raised" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:44

### It is sown a natural body

Here, just as in [15:42–43](#), Paul speaks as if a dead body were **sown** like a seed. He speaks in this way to connect how a dead body is buried in the ground with how a seed is **sown** in the ground. However, Paul does not continue the metaphor when he talks about how the body **is raised**, since those are his normal words for speaking about resurrection. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **is sown** with a comparable phrase that applies to both seeds and human bodies, or you could express the idea using an analogy. Alternate translation: “The body is put in the ground as a natural body, just like a seed” or “It is planted as a natural body” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### It is sown & it is raised

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the body that **is sown** and **raised** rather than focusing on the people who do those actions. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “people” do the sowing and “God” does the raising. Alternate translation: “People sow it as ... God raises it as” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### a natural body; & a natural body

Here, **natural body** refers to human bodies before they are **raised**. These bodies are those that function in the ways that we can observe right now and that fit with life on earth right now. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **natural body** with a word or phrase that refers to human bodies as they currently exist on earth before God transforms them. Alternate translation: “a this-worldly body ... a this-worldly body” or “a regular body ... a regular body” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### a spiritual body. & a spiritual {body}

Here, **spiritual {body}** refers to human bodies after they are **raised**. It could specifically refer to: (1) how the **body** is controlled by God’s Spirit and thus fits with how people will live when God renews everything he has created. Alternate translation: “a body fit for the new creation ... a body fit for the new creation” or “a body controlled by God’s Spirit ... a body controlled by God’s Spirit” (2) how the **{body}** is made out of “spirit” as opposed to “soul” or “flesh.” Alternate translation: “a body made out of spirit ... a body made out of spirit” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### If

Paul is speaking as if the **natural body** was 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 think that what Paul is saying is not certain, then you can introduce the clause with a word such as “since” or “because.” Alternate translation: “Since” or “Because” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.648)**)

# 1 Corinthians 15:45

## So also

Here, **So also** introduces the basis for the claim Paul made about the existence of both “natural” and “spiritual” bodies in the last verse (15:44). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **So also** with a word or phrase that introduces evidence or support. Alternate translation: “For” or “As” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship** (p.655))

## it is written

In Paul’s culture, **it is written** was a normal way to introduce a quotation from an important text. In this case, the quotation comes from [Genesis 2:7](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express how Paul introduces the quotation with a comparable phrase that indicates that Paul is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: “it can be read in Genesis” or “the author of the book of Genesis says” (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins** (p.761))

## it is written

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what **is written** rather than focusing on the person doing the “writing.” If you must state who does the action, you can express it so that: (1) the scripture author writes or speaks the words. Alternate translation: “Moses has written” (2) God speaks the words. Alternate translation: “God has said” (See: **Active or Passive** (p.621))

## it is written, “The first man Adam became a living soul

If your language does not use this form, you can translate the sentence as an indirect quote instead of as a direct quote. Alternate translation: “it is written that the first man Adam became a living soul” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations** (p.668))

## man

Although **man** is masculine, and **Adam** was male, Paul is focusing on how **Adam** was the first human being. He is not focusing on how **Adam** was the first male human being. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **man** with a non gendered word. Alternate translation: “person” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women** (p.785))

## a living soul

Here, **soul** is a different form of the word that was translated “natural” in 15:44. Paul uses this similar word to make the point that **Adam** had a “natural body” when God created him. If possible, use words that connect back to how you translated “natural” in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “a living, this-worldly human” or “a living person with a regular body” (See: **Translate Unknowns** (p.780))

## The last Adam

Here, **The last Adam** refers to Jesus. Paul wishes to draw connections between Adam and Jesus, and so he calls **Adam** the **first man Adam**, and he calls Jesus the **last Adam**. Each “Adam” is the first person to have a specific kind of body: the **first** Adam has a “natural body” as a **living soul**, while the **last** Adam has a “spiritual body” as a **life-**

**giving spirit.** If it would be helpful in your language, you could express who **The last Adam** is by clarifying that it refers to Jesus the Messiah. Alternate translation: “Jesus, the last Adam,” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## Adam {is} a life-giving spirit

Here Paul omits some words that your language may need to make a complete thought. Paul could be implying: (1) a word such as “{is}.” See the ULT. (2) the word **became** from the previous sentence. Alternate translation: “Adam became a life-giving spirit” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## is} a life-giving spirit

Here, **spirit** is a different form of the word that was translated “spiritual” in 15:44. Paul uses this similar word to make the point that Jesus had a “spiritual body” after his resurrection. If possible, use words that connect back to how you translated “spiritual” in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “a person who gives life with a body fit for the new creation” or “a person whose body is controlled by God’s Spirit and who gives life” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## is} a life-giving spirit

Here, **life-giving** refers to how Jesus, **The last Adam**, “gives” the “life” that he now has to everyone who believes in him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **life-giving** with a phrase that identifies Jesus as the one who gives life. Alternate translation: “a spirit who gives life” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:46

### But

Here, **But** introduces a clarification of the point that Paul made in the previous verse. It does not introduce a strong contrast. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **But** with a word or phrase that introduces a clarification or further explanation. Alternate translation: “As a matter of fact,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases** (p.662))

### But the spiritual {is} not first, but the natural, then the spiritual

Here Paul first negates the idea that **the spiritual** is **first** and then states that it comes after **the natural**. Paul states this idea in both negative and positive ways to emphasize the correct sequence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express why Paul states both negative and positive versions of the same claim by stating just one of the versions. Alternate translation: “But the natural is first, then the spiritual” or “But the spiritual is not first; rather the natural is first” (See: **Information Structure** (p.716))

### the spiritual {is} not first, but the natural, then the spiritual

Here, **first** and **then** indicate sequence in time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that Paul has sequence in time in mind with words that more clearly refer to time. Alternate translation: “the spiritual is not before the natural; rather, the natural is before the spiritual” (See: **Connect — Sequential Time Relationship** (p. 658))

### the spiritual {& the natural, & the spiritual

Paul is using the adjectives **spiritual** and **natural** as nouns in order to refer to bodies that are **spiritual** or **natural**. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: “the spiritual body ... the natural body ... the spiritual body” (See: **Nominal Adjectives** (p.738))

### the spiritual {& the natural, & the spiritual

Here Paul does not specify whose bodies **the spiritual** and **the natural** refer to. He does this to allow for at least two interpretations. If possible, translate this verse in such a way that your readers could infer either or both of the following. The words **spiritual** and **natural** could refer to: (1) the bodies of Jesus (**spiritual**) and Adam (**natural**). Alternate translation: “the spiritual body that belongs to Jesus ... the natural body that belonged to Adam ... the spiritual body that belongs to Jesus” (2) the bodies that every believer has while alive (**natural**) and after resurrecting (**spiritual**). Alternate translation: “any believer’s spiritual body ... his or her natural body ... his or her spiritual body” (See: **When to Keep Information Implicit** (p.787))

### the spiritual {& the spiritual

Here, just as in 15:44, **spiritual** refers to human bodies after they are raised. It could specifically refer to: (1) how the body is controlled by God’s Spirit and thus fits with how people will live when God renews everything he has created. Alternate translation: “the one fit for the new creation ... the one fit for the new creation” or “that controlled by God’s Spirit ... that controlled by God’s Spirit” (2) how the body is made out of “spirit” as opposed to “soul” or “flesh.” Alternate translation: “that made out of spirit ... that made out of spirit” (See: **Translate Unknowns** (p.780))

## natural

Here, just as in [15:44](#), **natural** refers to human bodies before they are raised. These bodies are those that function in the ways that we can observe right now and that fit with life on earth right now. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **natural** with a word or phrase that refers to human bodies as they currently exist on earth before God transforms them. Alternate translation: “the this-worldly” or “regular” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:47

### The first man {& The second man

Here, **first man** refers to Adam, the first human whom God created. The **second man** refers to Jesus, the first human to receive the new resurrection body. Paul describes them as **first** and **second** because Adam was the **first** to receive a specific kind of body, and Jesus was the **second** to receive a specific kind of body, a body different than the body that Adam received. This is the same point he made in the last verse about which body comes “first” (15:46). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **first man** and **second man** by clarifying to whom they refer. Alternate translation: “The first man, Adam, ... The second man, Jesus,” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### The first man {& The second man

Although **man** is masculine, and both Adam (**The first man**) and Jesus (**The second man**) are male, Paul is focusing on how the **first** and **second man** are representative human beings. He is not focusing on the **first** and **second man** as representative males. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **man** with a non gendered word. Alternate translation: “The first person ... The second person” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### is} of the earth, made of dust

Here Paul refers again to [Genesis 2:7](#). In that verse, we learn about how God made the **first man**, Adam, out of **dust**. Paul uses this reference to **dust** to prove that the **first man** has the kind of life and body that belongs on **the earth**. So, **of the earth** means almost the same thing that “natural” means in [15:46](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **of the earth, made of dust** by clarifying that Paul is referring to the story about how God made the **first man** as a human who has a body and life fit for **the earth**. Alternate translation: “God made out of dust, and he is fit for the earth” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### is} from heaven

Here, **from heaven** could refer to: (1) how Jesus, the **second man**, has a body and life fit for heaven and the new creation. In this case, **from heaven** would mean basically the same thing that “spiritual” means in [15:46](#). Alternate translation: “is fit for heaven” (2) how Jesus, the **second man**, came **from heaven** when he became a human. Alternate translation: “came from heaven” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:48

### As the earthly, so also {are} the ones of earth; and as the heavenly, so also {are} the ones of heaven

In this verse, Paul does not use any verbs. He does this because he did not need verbs in his culture to state that the **earthly** and **the ones of earth** are the same kind of thing and that the **heavenly** and **the ones of heaven** are the same kind of thing. If your language does not need verbs or other words to state that two different things or groups belong together as the same kind of thing, you can use those verbs or words here. Alternate translation: “The earthly and those of the earth are of the same type; and the heavenly and those of heaven are of the same type” or “As the earthly exists, in the same way those of the earth exist; and as the heavenly exists, in the way those of heaven exist” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### the earthly, & the heavenly

Paul is using the adjectives **earthly** and **heavenly** as nouns in order to refer back to the “first man” (who is “of the earth”) and the “second man” (who is “of heaven”) from the previous verse (15:47). Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate these with noun phrases that refer back to those people. Alternate translation: “the earthly first man ... the heavenly second man” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### the ones of earth

Here, **the ones of earth** refers to people who are not united to Jesus and who thus belong to the **earth**. Paul uses this language to connect these people with the **earthly** first man. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the ones of earth** with a word or phrase that clarifies that **the ones of earth** describes people who are represented by Adam, not by Jesus. Alternate translation: “those of the earth who are represented by him” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### the ones of earth; & the ones of heaven

Here, **the ones of earth** and **the ones of heaven** refer to people who are “earthly” and “heavenly.” This means that **earth** is the proper home of **the ones of earth**, while **heaven** is the proper home of **the ones of heaven**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form with adjectives such as “earthly” or “heavenly,” or you could refer to the “home” of these people. Alternate translation: “those who are earthly ... those who are heavenly” or “those whose home is on earth ... those whose home is in heaven” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)

### the ones of heaven

Here, **the ones of heaven** refers to people who are united to Jesus and who thus belong to **heaven**, as Jesus does. Paul uses this language to connect these people with the **heavenly** second man. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the ones of heaven** with a word or phrase that clarifies that **the ones of heaven** describes people who are represented by Jesus, not by Adam. Alternate translation: “those of heaven, who are represented by Jesus” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)



## 1 Corinthians 15:49

### we have borne

Here, the past tense **have borne** does not mean that **we** no longer “bear” this **image**. Rather, it means that we began to “bear” it and continue to do so now. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **we have borne** with a tense that naturally refers to a current, ongoing state. Alternate translation: “we bear” (See: **Predictive Past (p.754)**)

### we have borne the image of the earthly, let us also bear the image of the heavenly

Here, to **bear the image** of something or somebody refers to being similar to that thing or person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **bear the image** with a word or phrase that identifies something as similar or like something else. Alternate translation: “we have been modeled on the earthly, let us also be modeled on the heavenly” or “we have the likeness of the earthly, let us also have the likeness of the heavenly” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### the image of the earthly, & the image of the heavenly

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **image**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “reflect” or “participate.” Alternate translation: “how we reflect the earthly ... how we reflect the heavenly” or “the way we participate in the earthly ... the way we participate in the heavenly” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### of the earthly, & of the heavenly

Paul is using the adjectives **earthly** and **heavenly** as nouns in order to refer to bodies that are **earthly** and **heavenly**. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate these with noun phrases. Alternate translation: “of the earthly body ... of the heavenly body” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### of the earthly, & of the heavenly

Here Paul does not specify whose bodies **the earthly** and **the heavenly** refer to. However, the previous verses imply that the **earthly** body belongs to the “first man,” Adam, while the **heavenly** body belongs to the “second man,” Jesus. If your readers would not make this inference, you could express the idea explicitly. Alternate translation: “of the earthly body that belongs to the first man ... of the heavenly body that belongs to the second man” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### let us also bear

Here Paul uses the exhortation **let us also bear** in order to urge all believers to act in such a way that God will raise them so that they have a body like the **heavenly** man, Jesus. Paul does not think that people change themselves into the **image of the heavenly**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **let us also bear** by clarifying that Paul is urging everyone to live in a certain way. Alternate translation: “let us think and act so that we also bear” (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p.713)**)

## let us also bear

In Paul's language, **let us also bear** and "we will also bear" look and sound very similar. Both options have some evidence to support them. Consider whether translations your readers might be familiar with choose one of the options. If there is no strong reason to choose one option over the other, you could follow the ULT. (See: **Textual Variants (p.775)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:50

Now this I say, brothers, that

### Connecting Statement:

Here, **Now this I say** introduces a new topic that Paul wishes to discuss. Because of that, **this** refers to what Paul says in the rest of this verse, not to what he has already said. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Now this I say** with a word or phrase that introduces and refers forward to a new topic. Alternate translation: "Next, I am going to say something important, brothers:" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p. 756)**)

brothers

### Connecting Statement:

Although **brothers** is in masculine form, Paul is using it to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: "brothers and sisters" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

**flesh and blood are not able to inherit the kingdom of God. Neither does the perishable inherit the imperishable**

Here Paul makes two very similar statements in which **flesh and blood** goes with **perishable** and **the kingdom of God** goes with **imperishable**. These two statements could: (1) be basically synonymous, and Paul repeats himself to emphasize the point. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine the two sentences into one to show why Paul uses two parallel sentences. Alternate translation: "perishable flesh and blood are not able to inherit the imperishable kingdom of God" (2) refer first to people who are alive (**flesh and blood**) and then to people who are dead (**perishable**). In this case, you should preserve some distinction between the two sentences. Alternate translation: "flesh and blood are not able to inherit the kingdom of God, and the perishable are not able to inherit the imperishable" (See: **Parallelism (p.745)**)

**flesh and blood**

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The words **flesh** and **blood** together describe the human body as it currently exists. 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: "the fleshly" or "the things that exist now" (See: **Hendiadys (p.696)**)

**flesh and blood**

Here, **flesh and blood** represents a body that is made out of **flesh and blood**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **flesh and blood** with an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: "flesh and blood bodies" (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

## to inherit & does & inherit

Here Paul speaks of **the kingdom of God** that is **imperishable** as if it were property that a parent could pass on to their child when the parent dies. He speaks in this way to indicate that believers will eventually receive and live in **the kingdom of God** that God has promised to them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “to live in ... does ... live in” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## the perishable & the imperishable

Here, **perishable** and **imperishable** identify whether people or things last or fall apart. These words are the same ones translated as “decay” and “immortality” in [15:42](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **perishable** and **imperishable** with two words or phrases that refer to how long things last. Alternate translation: “what passes away ... what never passes away” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## the perishable & the imperishable

Paul is using the adjectives **perishable** and **imperishable** as nouns in order to refer to **perishable** bodies and the **imperishable** kingdom. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate these with appropriate noun phrases. Alternate translation: “a perishable body ... the imperishable kingdom” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:51

### Behold

Here, **Behold** draws the attention of the audience and asks them to listen carefully. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Behold** with a word or phrase that asks the audience to listen. Alternate translation: "Listen up" or "Hear me" (See: **Exclamations (p.683)**)

### a mystery

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **mystery**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as "secret" or "mysterious." Alternate translation: "a mysterious thing" or "what was secret" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### We will not all fall asleep, & we will all be changed

Here, **we** refers to all believers, including Paul, the Corinthians, and others. Paul is speaking in general terms about believers. He does not necessarily think that he is one who will not **fall asleep**. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive 'We' (p.685)**)

### We will not all fall asleep

Here Paul refers to how people die as if they **fall asleep**. This is a polite way of referring to something unpleasant. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **fall asleep** with a different polite way of referring to death or you could state the idea plainly. Alternate translation: "We will not all pass away" (See: **Euphemism (p.681)**)

### πάντες & ἀλλαγησόμεθα

Here, **changed** refers to how the bodies of believers are transformed from "natural" to "spiritual." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **changed** with a word or phrase that refers to this kind of transformation. Alternate translation: "we will all be renewed" or "we will all be transfigured" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### πάντες & ἀλλαγησόμεθα

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on the people who are **changed** rather than focusing on the person who does the "changing." If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that "God" does it. Alternate translation: "God will change us all" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:52

### in an instant

Here, **instant** refers to the smallest segment of time that Paul and the Corinthians knew about. He means that the “change” (15:51) will happen so quickly that it will only take up the smallest bit of time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate **in a moment** to refer to the smallest amount of time in your culture or to express the idea in a way that emphasizes speed. Alternate translation: “in one second” or “very quickly” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### in the twinkling of an eye

Here, **in the twinkling of an eye** refers to the speed at which one moves or blinks one’s eye. Paul’s point is that the “change” (15:51) will take place so quickly that one cannot move one’s eye fast enough to see it, or if one blinks, one might miss it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “in the blink of an eye” or “at great speed” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### at the last trumpet. For a trumpet will sound

Paul refers briefly to the **last trumpet** without explanation because the Corinthians would have known what he was talking about. In Paul’s culture, people knew that a **trumpet** would **sound** to signal the Day of the Lord, in this case, the day when Jesus comes back, the dead rise, and the world is renewed. An angel or archangel would blow this trumpet. If your readers would not make such inferences about **the last trumpet**, you could express some of these ideas explicitly. Alternate translation: “when we hear the trumpet that means that Jesus is coming back. For that trumpet will sound” or “when an angel sounds the end-times trumpet. For the angel will sound that trumpet” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### the dead will be raised

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive here to focus on **the dead** who **will be raised** rather than focusing on the one doing the “raising.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God will raise the dead” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### the dead

Paul is using the adjective **dead** as a noun in order to refer to believers who are **dead**. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: “the dead people” or “the corpses” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### imperishable

Here, **imperishable** identifies people or things that last and do not fall apart. See you how translated this word in 15:50. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **imperishable** with a word or phrase that refers to how long things last. Alternate translation: “in such a way that they will never pass away” or “so that they never fall apart” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

**we**

Here, **we** refers to Paul, the Corinthians, and all other believers who are alive. Paul included himself in this group because he was alive when he sent this letter. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that **we** refers to living believers with a phrase that makes this explicit. Alternate translation: “we who are alive” (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.685)**)

**we will be changed**

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive here to focus on **we** who **will be changed** rather than focusing on the one doing the “changing.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God will change us” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:53

### this perishable to put on incorruptibility, and this mortal to put on immortality

Here Paul makes two very similar statements in which **perishable** goes with **mortal** and **incorruptibility** goes with **immortality**. These two statements are basically synonymous, and Paul repeats himself to emphasize the point. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate why Paul uses two parallel sentences by combining the two sentences into one. Alternate translation: “this perishable mortal to put on incorruptible immortality” or “this perishable and mortal to put on incorruptibility and immortality” (See: **Parallelism (p.745)**)

### this perishable & this mortal

Paul is using the adjectives **perishable** and **mortal** as nouns in order to refer to **perishable** and **mortal** bodies. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate these with appropriate noun phrases. Alternate translation: “this perishable body ... this mortal body” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### this perishable & incorruptibility

Here, **perishable** and **incorruptibility** identify whether people or things last or fall apart. See how you translated the similar words in [15:42](#), [50](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **perishable** and **incorruptibility** with two words or phrases that refer to how long things last. Alternate translation: “what passes away ... what never passes away” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### to put on incorruptibility, & to put on immortality

Here Paul speaks as if the **perishable** and the **mortal** could **put on incorruptibility** and **immortality** like they were pieces of clothing. He does not mean that believers still have what is **perishable** and **mortal** somehow underneath **incorruptibility** and **immortality**. Instead, Paul uses the metaphor to illustrate how people will change identity from what is **perishable** and **mortal** to **incorruptibility** and **immortality**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “to change into incorruptibility ... to change into immortality” or “to become incorruptible ... to become immortal” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### incorruptibility, & immortality

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **incorruptibility** and **immortality**, you can express the idea by using adjectives such as “incorruptible” and “immortal.” Alternate translation: “what is incorruptible ... what is immortal” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### this mortal & immortality

Here, **mortal** and **immortality** identify whether people or things die or cannot die. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **mortal** and **immortality** with two words or phrases that refer to whether things can die or not. Alternate translation: “what can die ... what never dies” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)



## 1 Corinthians 15:54

### this perishable has put on incorruptibility, and this mortal has put on immortality

Here, these clauses repeat the words found at the end of the last verse (15:53). Paul repeats these words to make what he is arguing very clear. If your readers do not need these words to be repeated, and if they would be confused about why Paul is repeating himself, you could refer back to the words in the previous verse with a short phrase. Alternate translation: “that happens” (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)

### this perishable has put on incorruptibility, and this mortal has put on immortality

Here Paul makes two very similar statements in which **perishable** goes with **mortal** and **incorruptibility** goes with **immortality**. These two statements are basically synonymous, and Paul repeats himself to emphasize the point. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate why Paul uses two parallel sentences by combining the two sentences into one. Alternate translation: “this perishable mortal has put on incorruptible immortality” or “this perishable and mortal has put on incorruptibility and immortality” (See: **Parallelism (p.745)**)

### this perishable & this mortal

Paul is using the adjectives **perishable** and **mortal** as nouns in order to refer to **perishable** and **mortal** bodies. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate these with appropriate noun phrases. Alternate translation: “this perishable body ... this mortal body” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

### this perishable & incorruptibility

Here, **perishable** and **incorruptibility** identify whether people or things last or fall apart. See how you translated these words in 15:53. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **perishable** and **incorruptibility** with two words or phrases that refer to how long things last. Alternate translation: “what passes away ... what never passes away” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### has put on incorruptibility, & has put on immortality

Here Paul speaks as if the **perishable** and the **mortal** could **put on incorruptibility** and **immortality** like they were pieces of clothing. He does not mean that believers still have what is **perishable** and **mortal** somehow underneath **incorruptibility** and **immortality**. Instead, Paul uses the metaphor to illustrate how people will change identity from what is **perishable** and **mortal** to **incorruptibility** and **immortality**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “has changed into incorruptibility ... has changed into immortality” or “has become incorruptible ... has become immortal” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### incorruptibility, & immortality

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **incorruptibility** and **immortality**, you can express the idea by using adjectives such as “incorruptible” and “immortal.” Alternate translation: “what is incorruptible ... what is immortal” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## this mortal & immortality

Here, **mortal** and **immortality** identify whether people or things die or cannot die. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **mortal** and **immortality** with two words or phrases that refer to whether things can die or not. See how you translated these words in [15:53](#). Alternate translation: “what can die ... what never dies” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## will come about

Here, **will come about** identifies that something will happen or come to pass. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **will come about** with a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “will come to pass” or “will be realized” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## the word

Here, **word** represents what someone says or writes in words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **word** with an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: “the message” (See: **Metonymy (p.736)**)

## the word that is written

In Paul’s culture, **the word that is written** is a normal way to introduce a quotation from or reference to an important text, in this case, the Old Testament book titled “Isaiah” (See: [Isaiah 25:8](#)). Most likely, this phrase introduces the quote from [Hosea 13:14](#) in the next verse as well. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **the word that is written** with a comparable phrase that indicates that Paul is quoting from or referring to an important text. Alternate translation: “what can be read in the Scriptures” or “the words that Isaiah and Hosea wrote” (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

## that is written

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to focus on what **is written** rather than focusing on the person doing the “writing.” If you must state who does the action, you can express it so that: (1) the scripture author writes or speaks the words. Alternate translation: “the prophets have written” (2) God speaks the words. Alternate translation: “God has said” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory

If you do not use this form in your language, you could translate this statement as an indirect quote instead of as a direct quote. Alternate translation: “that is written about how death is swallowed up in victory” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

## Death is swallowed up in victory

Here the quote refers to **Death** as if it were food that could be **swallowed up**. This illustrates that **Death** has been defeated as surely as if someone devoured it as though death were food. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “Death is destroyed in victory” or “Death is trampled in victory” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## Death is swallowed up in victory

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive here to focus on **Death**, which **is swallowed up**, rather than focusing on the person or thing doing the “swallowing.” If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that “God” does it. Alternate translation: “God has swallowed up death in victory” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

## Death & in victory

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **Death** and **victory**, you can express the ideas by using verbs such as “die” and “conquer.” Alternate translation: “How people die ... when God conquers” or “The fact that people die ... by God, who is victorious” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

# 1 Corinthians 15:55

## Death

Here Paul quotes from [Hosea 13:14](#) without providing a new quote introduction. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this way of introducing a new quotation with a form in your language that introduces another quote. Alternate translation: “And again, ‘O death’” or “It is further written, ‘O death’” (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.761)**)

## Death, where {is} your victory? Death, where {is} your sting

If you do not use this form in your language, you could translate this statement as an indirect quote instead of as a direct quote. You may need to include a word or phrase at the beginning to indicate that Paul is introducing a new quotation. Alternate translation: “It is further written that death is asked about where its victory is and about where its sting is” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.668)**)

## Death, where {is} your victory? Death, where {is} your sting

Here Paul quotes how Hosea addresses something that he knows cannot hear him, **Death**, in order to show his listeners in a strong way how he feels about it. If this is confusing in your language, consider expressing this feeling by talking about **Death**. Alternate translation: “Where is the victory of death? Where is the sting of death?” (See: **Apostrophe (p.624)**)

## Death, where {is} your victory? Death, where {is} your sting

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **Death**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “die.” If you do this, you may need to express the direct address to **Death** in another way. Alternate translation: “When people die, where is the victory? When people die, where is the sting?” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## Death, where {is} your victory? Death, where {is} your sting

Here Paul quotes how Hosea repeats **O death, where {is} your**. Parallel structures like this were poetic in Hosea’s culture. If it would be helpful in your language, and if it would not be worded powerfully in your culture, you could indicate why Paul repeats words and structure by eliminate some or all of the repetition and by making the statements powerful in another way. Alternate translation: “O death, where is your conquest?” or “O death, where are your victory and sting?” (See: **Parallelism (p.745)**)

## Death, where {is} your victory? Death, where {is} your sting

Paul does not quote these questions because he is looking for information about **where** death’s **victory** and **sting** are. Rather, the questions involve the Corinthians in what Paul is arguing. The question assumes that the answer is “nowhere.” In other words, there is no **victory** or **sting** for **Death**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind these questions with a strong negation. Alternate translation: “O death, you have no victory! O death, you have no sting!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.766)**)

## your & your

Both appearances of **your** refer back to **Death** and are singular. (See: **Forms of You (p.689)**)

## where {is} your victory

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **victory**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “conquer.” Alternate translation: “have you conquered anything” or “where is how you have conquered” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## ποῦ σου & τὸ κέντρον

Here, **sting** refers to a sharp point, particularly the kind that insects have that can pierce skin, inject poison, and cause pain. The author of this quotation (Hosea) speaks as if **Death** has a **sting**, referring to how death causes pain both for the person who dies and for others who have lost someone they love. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **sting** with a comparable figure of speech or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “where is the pain that you cause” or “where is your ability to harm” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:56

### But

Here, **But** introduces a clarification or further elaboration. It does not introduce a contrast with the quotations in the previous two verses. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **But** with a word or phrase that introduces a clarification or elaboration, or you could leave it untranslated. Alternate translation: “Now” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### the sting of death {is} sin

Here, **the sting of death** refers back to the same words in the quote in [15:56](#). Express the metaphor the same you did there. Alternate translation: “the pain that death causes comes from sin” or “death’s ability to harm {is} sin” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### of death {is} sin

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **death** and **sin**, you can express the ideas by using verbs such as “die” and “sin.” Alternate translation: “that leads to dying is how people sin” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### ἡ & δύναμις τῆς ἀμαρτίας ὁ νόμος

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas behind **power** and **sin**, you can express the ideas by using verbs such as “empower” and “sin.” Alternate translation: “the law makes what make people do wrong powerful” or “it is the law that empowers how people sin” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:57

### thanks {be} to God

Here, **thanks {be} to God** is a way to indicate that one is praising God for something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this phrase with a normal way in your language to thank or praise someone for what that person has done. Alternate translation: “we thank God” or “we give glory to God” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### the one giving us the victory

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **victory**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “defeat” or “conquer.” Alternate translation: “who empowers us to defeat them” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### the victory

Here Paul does not express whom **the victory** is over. However, the Corinthians would have inferred from the previous verse that Paul meant both “sin” and “death.” If your readers would not make this inference, you could express the idea explicitly. Alternate translation: “the victory over sin and death” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 15:58

### brothers

## Connecting Statement:

Although **brothers** is in masculine form, Paul is using it to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “brothers and sisters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### my beloved brothers

## Connecting Statement:

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that he himself loves them. Alternate translation: “my brothers whom I love” (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### steadfast, immovable

Here, both **steadfast** and **immovable** refer to people who hold their positions steadily. The word **steadfast** emphasizes that someone is reliable or faithful, while **immovable** emphasizes that someone is stable and cannot be moved. Paul uses two similar words to emphasize the need to maintain one position. If your language does not have two words to represent these ideas, or if your readers would find the repetition confusing instead of emphatic, you can express the idea with a single word or phrase. Alternate translation: “reliable” or “strong in your faith” (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)

### become steadfast, immovable

Here Paul speaks as if he wanted the Corinthians to be an object or thing that stays in one place. He speaks in this way because he wants them to continue to believe the gospel as firmly as if it was a location that they could remain in. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “become those with a tight grip” or “dependable, stable” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### the work of the Lord

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **work**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “work.” Alternate translation: “how you work for the Lord” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### in the work of the Lord

Here Paul uses the possessive form to describe **work** that is done for **the Lord**. If your language does not use that form for this meaning, you can express the idea with a phrase such as “that is for.” Alternate translation: “in your work for the Lord” (See: **Possession (p.750)**)



## knowing

Here, **knowing** introduces the reason why the Corinthians should do what Paul is commanding them to do. If your readers would not recognize that **knowing** introduces a reason or basis, you could express that idea explicitly. Alternate translation: “for you know” or “since you know” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p. 655)**)

## your labor

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **labor**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “labor.” Alternate translation: “how you labor” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## in vain

Here, **in vain** identifies a cause that does not have its intended effect. In this case, the Corinthians’ **labor** is not **in vain** because it is **in the Lord** and will thus lead to its intended effect. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **in vain** with a word or phrase that identifies a cause that does not have its intended effect. Alternate translation: “for nothing” or “to no purpose” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## in the Lord

Here Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in the Lord** to describe the union of believers with the Lord. In this case, being **in the Lord** or united to the Lord identifies why the Corinthians can “know” that their **labor is not in vain**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind this figure of speech by using a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “in union with the Lord” or “because you are united to the Lord” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)



## 1 Corinthians 16

## 1 Corinthians 16 General Notes

### Structure and Formatting

On the collection and visits (16:1–12)

- The collection (16:1–4)
- Travel plans (16:5–12)

Closing: final commands and greetings (16:13–24)

- Final commands (16:13–18)
- Greetings and closing (16:19–24)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

#### Letter writing and sending

In this culture, someone who wanted to send a letter often spoke what they wanted to say, and a scribe would write it down for them. Then, they would send the letter with a messenger, who would read the letter to the person or people to whom it was addressed. In this chapter, Paul mentions that he writes the final greeting or the last few verses “in my own hand” (16:21). This is because the rest of the letter was written by a scribe, who wrote down what Paul dictated. Paul writes the last greeting as a personal touch and to prove that he was indeed the author.

#### The collection

In 16:1–4, Paul refers to a “collection” that he will take or send to Jerusalem. He speaks at greater length about this “collection” in (Romans 15:22–32) and (2 Corinthians 8–9). His plan was to collect money from churches that were mostly Gentile and give that money to the church in Jerusalem that was mostly Jewish. In this way, the poorer believers in Jerusalem would receive support and Jewish and Gentile believers would be more connected. In these verses, Paul assumes that the Corinthians already know about this plan. He gives them instructions on how to help him carry it out. Make sure that you translate these verses in such a way that it is clear what Paul is talking about: collecting money to give to believers in Jerusalem.

#### Travel plans

In this chapter, Paul includes travel plans for himself (16:5–9) and for Timothy and Apollos (16:10–12). Paul and Apollos are in Ephesus, and Timothy has left Ephesus and is traveling to Corinth (in “Achaia”) when Paul writes this letter. When people traveled from Corinth to Ephesus or vice versa, they could go by boat through the Mediterranean Sea, or they could travel on land through what is now Northern Greece (“Macedonia”) and Western Turkey (“Asia”). Paul states that he plans to travel by land; it is not clear how Timothy or others traveled. Use words that are appropriate for these kinds of movements in your language. (See: **Go and Come** (p.694))

#### Greetings

In this culture, it was common for those who sent letters to include greetings to and from others in their letter. In this way, many people could greet each other but only send one letter. In 16:19–21 Paul includes greetings to and from people whom he and the Corinthians know. Express these greetings in a natural form in your language.

## 1 Corinthians 16:1

### Now concerning

### Connecting Statement:

Just as in 7:1, 25, **Now concerning** introduces a new topic that Paul wishes to address. Likely, the topics that he introduces in this way are what the Corinthians wrote to him about. Translate **Now concerning** here as you did in 7:1, 25. Alternate translation: “Next, about” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### the collection

### Connecting Statement:

Here, **the collection** refers to money that is “collected” from people for a specific purpose. Here Paul clarifies that it is “collected” **for the saints**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **collection** with a word or phrase that refers to money that is “collected” for a purpose. Alternate translation: “the offering” or “the money” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### for the saints

Here Paul does not clarify which **saints** he is speaking about. However, in 16:3, he states that this **collection** will be taken to “Jerusalem.” Therefore, the **saints** are Jewish people who believe in Jesus. The Corinthians would have known to which **saints** Paul is referring, but If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind who the **saints** are explicitly here instead of waiting until 16:3. Alternate translation: “for the Jewish saints” or “for the saints in Jerusalem” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### even as I directed the churches of Galatia, so also you must do

If your language would normally state the command (**you must do**) before the comparison (**even as**), you could reverse the order of these clauses. Alternate translation: “also you must do even as I directed the churches of Galatia” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

## 1 Corinthians 16:2

### Every first of the week

Here, the **first of the week** refers to the first day of the week in the Jewish calendar, which is the day we call Sunday. It is also the day on which Christians would hold special gatherings since Jesus rose from the dead on this day of the week. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Every first of the week** with a normal way to refer to Sunday, the first day of the week, which is when Christians gather to worship God. Alternate translation: "Every Sunday" or "On the worship day" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### let each of you put {something}

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as "should" or "must." Alternate translation: "each of you must put something" (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### let each of you put {something} aside

Here, to **put {something} aside** refers to putting some money in a specific location in one's house to use later for a specific purpose. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **put {something} aside** with a phrase that refers to putting money in a specific location. Alternate translation: "let each of you place some money in a special place" or "let each of you separate something out" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### storing up

Here, **storing up** refers to saving something, which in this case is money. Use a word or phrase that refers to saving money. Alternate translation: "reserving" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### from whatever he might have prospered

Here, **whatever he might have prospered** refers to how much money a person earned. Here, the phrase could specifically refer to: (1) how much more a person made than what they needed or expected. Paul would thus be asking the Corinthians to **put {something} aside** from the extra money that they received. Alternate translation: "from whatever you earned more than you expected" (2) the amount a person made in a specific period of time. Paul would thus be asking the Corinthians to **put {something} aside** in proportion to how much they made during a week. Alternate translation: "according to how much you made that week" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### he might have prospered

Although **he** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **he** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: "you might have prospered" or "he or she might have prospered" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### I come

Here Paul is speaking about his plan to visit the Corinthians at some point. Use a form in your language that indicates future travel plans to visit someone. Alternate translation: "I arrive where you live" (See: **Go and Come (p.694)**)

## there will not be collections

Here, **collections** refers to “collecting” money from people for a specific purpose. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **collections** with a word or phrase that refers to “collecting” money for a purpose. Alternate translation: “I will not need to ask for money” or “there will not be requested donations” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 16:3

### whomever you might approve

Here, those whom the Corinthians **approve** are those whom they consider to be trustworthy and able to accomplish the task of taking the money to Jerusalem. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **whomever you might approve** with a word or phrase that refers to choosing people to accomplish a specific task. Alternate translation: “whomever you might choose” or “whomever you might commission” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### whomever you might approve, I will send them

Here Paul identifies whom he is talking about first (**whomever you might approve**) and then refers back to that phrase by using **them** in the next clause. If your readers would find this structure confusing, you could restructure the sentence and indicate what Paul is talking about in another way. Alternate translation: “I will send whomever you might approve” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### with letters

In Paul’s culture, messengers and travelers often carried a letter or **letters** that were meant to introduce them to the person they were going to visit. These kinds of **letters** usually stated that the messenger or traveler was trustworthy and should be welcomed. You can find the sorts of things that would be written in these types of letters in [2 Corinthians 8:16–24](#). Here, the letters could be from: (1) Paul. Alternate translation: “with letters of introduction from me” (2) the Corinthians. Alternate translation: “with your letters of introduction” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### your gift

Here, **your gift** refers to the money that the Corinthians have “collected.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **your gift** by clarifying that it is the **gift** of the money that they have “put aside.” Alternate translation: “your money” or “your contribution” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)



## 1 Corinthians 16:4

### if it is appropriate for me to go also, they will go

Here Paul uses **if** to introduce a true possibility. He means that it might be **appropriate for me to go also**, or it might not. He specifies the result for when **it is appropriate**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this form by stating the if statement by introducing it with a word or phrase such as “suppose” or “were it to be.” Alternate translation: “suppose that it is appropriate for me to go also. Then, they will go” or “were it to be appropriate for me to go also, then they would will go” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.653)**)

### it is appropriate for

Here, **appropriate** identifies an action that fits or matches the situation. Paul does not explicitly state who thinks **it is appropriate**. It could be: (1) both Paul and the Corinthians. Alternate translation: “we consider it appropriate for” (2) just Paul. Alternate translation: “I think it is appropriate for” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### me to go also, they will go with me

Here, **go** refers to traveling to Jerusalem. Use a word or phrase that refers to traveling to a different location. Alternate translation: “me to travel also, they will travel with me” or “me also to visit Jerusalem, they will accompany me” (See: **Go and Come (p.694)**)

## 1 Corinthians 16:5

### But

Here, **But** introduces a new topic: Paul's own travel plans. It does not introduce a contrast with the previous verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **But** with a word or phrase that introduces a new topic, or you could leave it untranslated. Alternate translation: "Now" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### I will come to you

Here Paul is speaking about his plan to visit the Corinthians at some point. Use a form in your language that indicates future travel plans to visit someone. Alternate translation: "I will arrive where you live" (See: **Go and Come (p.694)**)

### I have passed through & I am going through

Here, **passed through** and **going through** refer to entering and then exiting an area while one is traveling. Use a form in your language that refers to this kind of movement. Alternate translation: "I have entered and then left ... I am entering and then leaving" (See: **Go and Come (p.694)**)

### I am going through

Here Paul speaks as if he were **going through Macedonia** while he writes this letter. He speaks in this way because it is his current plan to go **through Macedonia** when he leaves Ephesus. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express why Paul speaks in the present tense here with whatever tense is customarily used to speak about travel plans in your language. Alternate translation: "I will go through" (See: **Predictive Past (p.754)**)

## 1 Corinthians 16:6

### perhaps

Here, **perhaps** indicates that Paul is uncertain about how long he will stay with the Corinthians. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **perhaps** with a word that indicates uncertainty or lack of confidence. Alternate translation: “maybe” or “possibly” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### you may help me on my way

Here, to **help** people on their **way** refers to assisting them with the things that they need to travel, including food and money. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **help me on my way** with a comparable phrase. Alternate translation: “you could give me what I need to travel” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### wherever I might go

Here, **wherever I might go** identifies the place Paul will visit after he visits the Corinthians, but it does not state where that place is. In other words, Paul will travel somewhere else, but he does not say where. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **wherever I might go** with a word or phrase that refers to traveling to an unknown or unstated destination. Alternate translation: “to whatever city I want to visit” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### I might go

Here, **go** refers to how Paul will leave Corinth and travel to another place. Use a word that describes this kind of movement in your language. Alternate translation: “I might head” or “I might travel” (See: **Go and Come (p.694)**)

## 1 Corinthians 16:7

### to see

Here, **to see** people refers to spending time with them, not just seeing them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **to see** with a comparable figure of speech or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “to visit” or “to spend time with” (See: **Synecdoche (p.773)**)

### now

Here, **now** refers to the soonest Paul could arrive in Corinth. It contrasts with a visit that could happen later and last longer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **now** with a word or phrase that refers to the near future. Alternate translation: “very soon” (See: **Predictive Past (p.754)**)

### now only in passing

Here, **only in passing** gives the reason why Paul does **not desire to see you now**. If he were to visit them **now**, it would be **only in passing**, and Paul thinks that such a short visit is not worthwhile. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate how **only in passing** relates to **I do not desire to see you now** by making the relationship more explicit. Alternate translation: “now, since it would only be in passing” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.655)**)

### only in passing

Here, **only in passing** refers to a brief time, particularly a time between two other events. Paul is referring to a short visit while traveling somewhere else. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **only in passing** with a comparable phrase that refers to a short period of time. Alternate translation: “as I travel through” or “briefly” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### for some time

Here, **for some time** refers to a longer period of time than **only in passing**. Given what Paul said in the previous verse (16:6), it probably refers to a time period as long as “winter.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **for some time** with a word or phrase that refers to a period of time as long as a whole season. Alternate translation: “for a while” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### if the Lord would permit

Here, **if the Lord would permit** means that Paul plans on traveling in the ways he has described, but he acknowledges that this will only happen if that is what **the Lord** allows him to do. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this phrase with a comparable phrase that refers to what a deity allows or wants. Alternate translation: “if the Lord wills” or “given that this is what the Lord allows me to do” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

## **1 Corinthians 16:8**

(There are no notes for this verse.)

## 1 Corinthians 16:9

### a wide and effective door has opened for me

Paul speaks of his opportunity to preach the gospel in Ephesus as if someone had opened a door for him to enter into a room. He describes this door as **wide** to indicate that the opportunity is great. He describes the door as **effective** to indicate that his work is producing results. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that **a wide and effective door** that **has opened** describes a good opportunity that God has provided to preach the gospel with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “I have found a wide and effective window of opportunity” or “God has given me an effective ministry” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### a wide and effective door has opened

Here Paul speaks as if the **door** opens itself, but he implies that “God” is the one who has opened the door. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express how the **door has opened** by clarifying that God opens it. Alternate translation: “God has opened a wide and effective door” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### and

Here, **and** could introduce: (1) another reason why Paul plans on staying in Ephesus. In other words, he stays both to take advantage of the “open door” and because he needs to resist those who “oppose” him. Alternate translation: “and also” (2) a potential reason why Paul would not stay in Ephesus. Paul would be saying that the “open door” is enough reason to stay even though there are **many** who “oppose” him. Alternate translation: “even though” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.662)**)

### many

Paul is using the adjective **many** 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: “many people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.738)**)

## 1 Corinthians 16:10

### if Timothy comes

Paul is speaking as if **Timothy** coming was a hypothetical possibility, but he means that it is actually true. He has already stated that he has sent Timothy to the Corinthians (See: [4:17](#)). He uses **if** here to indicate that he is not sure when Timothy will arrive, not that he is unsure if Timothy will arrive at all. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, and if your readers might think that what Paul is saying is not certain, then you could translate his words as an affirmative statement. If possible, include the idea that the time of Timothy's arrival is uncertain. Alternate translation: "when Timothy eventually comes" (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.648)**)

### comes

Here Paul is speaking about how Timothy will visit the Corinthians. Use a word in your language that refers to a person arriving where someone lives to visit them. Alternate translation: "visits you" (See: **Go and Come (p.694)**)

### see that

Here, **see that** refers to carefully doing something or making sure that something happens. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **see that** with a comparable phrase. Alternate translation: "ensure that" or "be careful that" (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### he would be unafraid with you

Here Paul implies that the Corinthians could make Timothy "afraid." Throughout the letter, it has been clear that some of the Corinthians disagree with and even oppose Paul. Paul wants to make sure that the Corinthians do not treat Timothy badly because of his relationship with Paul. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind why Paul wants to make sure that Timothy is **unafraid** more explicitly. Alternate translation: "you do not intimidate him" or "he is not afraid because of you" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### he is doing the work of the Lord

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **work**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as "work." Alternate translation: "he is working for the Lord" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 16:11

### let no one despise him

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “must.” Alternate translation: “no one should despise him” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### let no one despise

Here, **despise** refers to how people treat others who have low status, including looking down on them and ignoring them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **despise** with a word or phrase that refers to how people treat others of lower status badly. Alternate translation: “let no one scorn him” or “let no one treat him with contempt” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

### help him on his way

Here, just as in **16:6**, to **help** people on their **way** refers to assisting them with the things that they need to travel, including food and money. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **help him on his way** with a comparable phrase. Alternate translation: “give him what he needs to travel” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### in peace

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **peace**, you can express the idea by using an adverb such as “peaceably.” Alternate translation: “peaceably” or “in a peaceful way” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### he may come to me

Here, **come** refers to how Timothy will travel from Corinth back to where Paul is. Use a word that naturally describes this kind of movement in your language. Alternate translation: “he may return to me” (See: **Go and Come (p.694)**)

### I am expecting him with the brothers

Here Paul is **expecting** Timothy to travel back to where Paul is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind that this is what **expecting** means more explicitly. Alternate translation: “I am expecting him to return with the brothers” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### I am expecting him with the brothers

Here, **the brothers** could be: (1) traveling with Timothy, and Paul is expecting their return along with Timothy. Alternate translation: “I am expecting him and the brothers” (2) with Paul, expecting Timothy to return. Alternate translation: “I, with the brothers, am expecting him”

### with the brothers

Paul provides no information about who **the brothers** are or how they relate to Timothy. He may refer to the same group of **brothers** again in the next verse (**16:12**). If possible, use a generic or general phrase that refers to other believers. Alternate translation: “with the fellow believers” (See: **When to Keep Information Implicit (p.787)**)



## the brothers

Although **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. It is possible that the **brothers** were male, but Paul is not focusing on their gender. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “the brothers and sisters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

## 1 Corinthians 16:12

### Now concerning

Just as in [16:1](#), **Now concerning** introduces a new topic that Paul wishes to address. Likely, the topics that he introduces in this way are what the Corinthians wrote to him about. Translate **Now concerning** here as you did in [16:1](#). Alternate translation: “Next, about” (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases \(p.662\)](#))

### the brother

Here, **brother** identifies **Apollos** as a fellow believer. **Apollos** was male, although **brother** does not emphasize this. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brother** with a word or phrase that identifies **Apollos** as a fellow believer. Alternate translation: “our Christian brother” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information \(p.626\)](#))

### he would come & he would come & he will come

Here, **come** refers to **Apollos** traveling from where Paul is to Corinth. Use a word that describes this kind of movement in your language. Alternate translation: “he would go ... he would go ... he will go” (See: [Go and Come \(p.694\)](#))

### with the brothers

Paul provides no information about who **the brothers** are or how they relate to Apollos. This may be the same group of **brothers** that Paul spoke about in the previous verse ([16:11](#)), or it may be the three people whom Paul mentions in [16:17](#). If possible, use a generic or general phrase that refers to other believers. Alternate translation: “with the fellow believers” (See: [When to Keep Information Implicit \(p.787\)](#))

### the brothers

Although **brothers** is masculine, Paul is using it to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. It is possible that the **brothers** were male, but Paul is not focusing on their gender. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “the brothers and sisters” (See: [When Masculine Words Include Women \(p.785\)](#))

### it was not at all his will

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **will**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “decide” or “choose.” Alternate translation: “it was not at all what he chose” or “he definitely did not choose” (See: [Abstract Nouns \(p.618\)](#))

### not at all

Here, **not at all** makes a stronger negation than **not** by itself. Use a word or phrase that makes a negation stronger. Alternate translation: “definitely not” (See: [Translate Unknowns \(p.780\)](#))

### his will

Here Paul does not state whose **will** he is referring to. It could be: (1) the **will** of **Apollos**. This fits with the next sentence, where **Apollos** is one who will decide when to come later. Alternate translation: “Apollos’ will” (2) the **will**

of God, who showed **Apollos** in some way that he should not go to Corinth. Alternate translation: “God’s will” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## **now**

Here, **now** refers to the journey that those bearing this letter took. **Apollos** decided not to go on this journey. Use a word or phrase that identifies the timing of the journey of those who carried this letter. Alternate translation: “at this time” or “on this trip” (See: **Predictive Past (p.754)**)

## **when he might have the opportunity**

Here, to **have the opportunity** refers to when the situation is right or appropriate for some action. Most likely, Paul means that **Apollos** will visit the Corinthians when he has time and when he thinks it is the proper time to do so. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **have the opportunity** with a word or phrase that identifies the appropriate time for something. Alternate translation: “when he has the chance” or “when the time is right” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## **he might have the opportunity**

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **opportunity**, you can express the idea by using an adjective such as “opportune” or “available.” Alternate translation: “when it is opportune” or “when he is available” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

# 1 Corinthians 16:13

## Stay alert; stand firm in the faith; act like men; be strong

Here Paul gives four short commands without any connecting words. All the commands are related to persevering in Christian belief and living. Use a form in your language that would be used for short commands in a row.

Alternate translation: “Stay alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, and be strong!” (See: **Information Structure (p.716)**)

### Stay alert

Here, **Stay alert** refers to keeping oneself from falling asleep. Paul speaks in this way to command the Corinthians to be watchful and pay attention to what is going on around them rather than “falling asleep.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Stay alert** with a comparable figure of speech or express the idea plainly.

Alternate translation: “Keep your eyes open” or “Pay attention” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### stand firm in the faith

Here Paul speaks as if **the faith** were something solid **in** which the Corinthians could **stand firm**. He speaks in this way because he wants them to persevere in the **faith** as much as people **stand firm** on the ground. People trust the ground to hold them up, and they can **stand** on it for a long time. In the same way, Paul wants the Corinthians to trust and persevere in **the faith**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “persevere in the faith” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### in the faith

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **faith**, you can express the idea in another way. Here, **faith** could refer primarily to: (1) the act of believing. Alternate translation: “as you believe” or “in how you believe” (2) what they believe. Alternate translation: “in what you believe” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### act like men

Here, **act like men** is a way to urge someone to be brave and courageous. The opposite of acting **like men** is acting like cowards. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this idiom with a comparable figure of speech or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “be stouthearted” or “act with courage” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### be strong

Here, **be strong** does not refer to physical strength but rather to mental strength or determination. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **be strong** with a word or phrase that urges mental strength or determination. Alternate translation: “keep persevering” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

## 1 Corinthians 16:14

### Let all your things happen

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word such as “should” or “must.” Alternate translation: “All your things must happen” (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### all your things

Here, **all your things** refers to everything that a person thinks and does. If your reader would misunderstand **all your things**, you could use an expression that refers to all the **things** that a person thinks and does. Alternate translation: “all that you do” or “all things that you think and do” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### in love

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **love**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “love” or an adjective such as “loving.” Alternate translation: “in a loving way” or “so that you are loving people” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 16:15

### Now

### Connecting Statement:

Here, **Now** introduces a new topic. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Now** with a comparable word or leave it untranslated. Alternate translation: “Next,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases** (p. 662))

**I urge you, brothers (you know the household of Stephanas, that they are the firstfruits of Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to service of the saints**

### Connecting Statement:

Here Paul begins a sentence with **I urge you, brothers**. He continues this sentence in the next verse with “that you also would be subject” (See: [16:16](#)). The rest of this verse interrupts that sentence with information about the people that Paul is going to speak about. The ULT indicates this interruption by using parentheses. If your readers would find this interruption confusing, you could use markers that indicate such an interruption in your language, or you could rearrange the verse so that **I urge you, brothers** goes more directly with the next verse. Alternate translation: “you know the household of Stephanas, that they are the firstfruits of Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints. I urge you, brothers,” (See: **Information Structure** (p.716))

### brothers

### Connecting Statement:

Although **brothers** is in masculine form, Paul is using it to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: “brothers and sisters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women** (p.785))

### the household of Stephanas

**Stephanas** is the name of a man. Paul already mentioned his **household** in [1:16](#). See how you translated this phrase there. (See: **How to Translate Names** (p.699))

### the firstfruits

Here, **firstfruits** refers to what farmers first gathered from their fields. Often, these **firstfruits** were offered to God to thank him for providing food. What Paul emphasizes here is that **firstfruits** are the first products from a field, although the word also implies that there will be more products. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that Paul uses **firstfruits** to emphasize that the **household of Stephanas** were the “first” to believe in Jesus with an analogy or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “like the firstfruits since they were the first to believe” or “the first believers” (See: **Metaphor** (p.730))

## of Achaia

**Achaia** is the name of a province in the southern part of what we call Greece. The city of Corinth is in this province. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.699)**)

## they have devoted themselves to

Here, **they have devoted themselves** refers to how these people decided to spend most of their time doing something specific. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **devoted themselves** with a word or phrase that refers to how people choose to spend their time doing one thing. Alternate translation: “they have focused on” or “they have dedicated themselves to” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## service of the saints

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **service**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “help” or “serve.” Alternate translation: “help the saints” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 16:16

### to the ones such as these

Here, **the ones such as these** refers back to the “household of Stephanas” from the previous verse (16:15). It also refers to anyone else who, like that “household,” “devote themselves to the service of the saints.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that **the ones such as these** refers to “the household of Stephanas” and others like them with a word or phrase that does clearly refer to these two groups. Alternate translation: “to people who are like that” or “to them and those such as them” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

### who is joining together in the work

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **work**, you can express the idea by using a verb such as “work.” Alternate translation: “who is working together” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### who is joining together in the work and laboring

Here, **joining together in the work** and **laboring** mean very similar things. The phrase **joining together in the work** emphasizes that people are working together. The word **laboring** emphasizes that the people are working hard. If your language does not have two words that represent these ideas, or if using two words here would be confusing, you can combine these ideas into one phrase. Alternate translation: “who is joining together in working hard” (See: **Doublet (p.676)**)



## 1 Corinthians 16:17

### Now

Here, **Now** introduces a new topic. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **Now** with a comparable word or leave it untranslated. Alternate translation: “Next,” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases** (p. 662))

### at the coming

Here, **coming** refers to how these three men came from Corinth to visit Paul and stay with him. Use a word in your language that refers to this kind of movement. Alternate translation: “at the visit” or “at the arrival” (See: **Go and Come** (p.694))

### of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus

**Stephanas**, **Fortunatus**, and **Achaicus** are the names of three men. **Stephanas** is the same man whom Paul mentioned in 16:15. (See: **How to Translate Names** (p.699))

### have supplied

Here, **supplied** refers to filling something up or making something complete. Here Paul says that these three men **supplied**, or filled up or completed, whatever Paul and the Corinthians were **lacking**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **supplied** with a word or phrase that refers to filling up or completing something. Alternate translation: “have filled up” or “have provided me with” (See: **Translate Unknowns** (p.780))

### what} was lacking from you

This could refer to: (1) what Paul is **lacking** in his relationship with the Corinthians. In other words, Paul misses the Corinthians and wishes he was with them. Alternate translation: “the contact with you that I was lacking” (2) what the Corinthians are **lacking** in how they are helping Paul. In other words, the Corinthians were not helping Paul very much until these three men arrived. Alternate translation: “the assistance that I was not receiving from you” (See: **Idiom** (p.710))

## 1 Corinthians 16:18

### they refreshed my spirit and yours

Here, **refreshed my spirit and yours** refers to how these three men helped Paul and the Corinthians regain energy, strength, and confidence. In other words, they helped Paul and the Corinthians feel better and stronger. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this idiom with a comparable idiom or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “they raised my spirits and yours” or “they helped me and you rest” (See: **Idiom (p. 710)**)

### my spirit and yours

Here, **spirit** is part of the idiom “refresh the spirit.” It refers to the **spirit** of the person, or their inner life, not to the Holy Spirit. If your readers would find **spirit** confusing, you could refer just to the people instead of to their “spirits.” Alternate translation: “me and you”

### yours

Here Paul omits what it is that is **yours**. He does this because he stated it in the previous phrase (**spirit**). If your language would not omit **spirit** here, you could include it. Alternate translation: “your spirits” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

### the ones like these

Here, **the ones like these** refers back to the three men whom Paul mentioned in the previous verse (16:17). It also refers to anyone else who, like those men, “refreshes the spirit” of others. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that **the ones like these** refers to the three men and others like them with a word or phrase that does clearly refer to these two groups. Alternate translation: “people who are like that” or “them and those such as them” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.756)**)

## 1 Corinthians 16:19

### send greetings & enthusiastically greet

As was customary in his culture, Paul concludes the letter by extending greetings from people who are with him and who know the people to whom he is writing. Your language may have a particular way of sharing greetings in a letter. If so, you could use that form here. Alternate translation: “ask to be remembered ... enthusiastically ask to be remembered to” or “send regards ... enthusiastically send regards to”

### enthusiastically

Here, **enthusiastically** indicates that **Aquila and Priscilla** wish to **greet** the Corinthians especially strongly or with extra friendship. Use a word or phrase that identifies an especially strong or friendly greeting. Alternate translation: “warmly” (See: **Idiom (p.710)**)

### in the Lord

Here Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in the Lord** to describe the union of believers with Christ. In this case, being **in the Lord**, or united to the Lord, identifies the greeting from **Aquila and Priscilla** as something that they give because both they and the Corinthians are united to the Lord. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “in their union with the Lord” or “as fellow believers” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### Aquila and Priscilla enthusiastically greet you in the Lord, with the church in their home

Paul has not included the verb “greet” with **the church in their home**, because it was unnecessary in his language. If including “greet” is necessary in your language, you could (1) move **with the church in their home** before **greet you**. Alternate translation: “Aquila and Priscilla, with the church in their home, enthusiastically greet you in the Lord” (2) include it with the phrase and **with the church in their home**. Alternate translation: “Aquila and Priscilla enthusiastically greet you in the Lord, and the church in their home also greets you” (See: **Ellipsis (p.678)**)

## 1 Corinthians 16:20

### All the brothers

Here, **All the brothers** refers to fellow believers. They could be: (1) everyone in Ephesus (where Paul is) who wishes to say hello to the believers in Corinth. Alternate translation: "All the brothers here" (2) the believers who travel and work with Paul. Alternate translation: "All the brothers who work with me" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### the brothers

Although **brothers** is in masculine form, Paul is using it to refer to any believer, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **brothers** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: "the brothers and sisters" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### greet

Here Paul continues to extend greetings from people who are with him. Translate **greet** as you did in [16:19](#). Alternate translation: "ask to be remembered to" or "send regards to"

### Greet one another

Since this letter would be read in public to the Corinthian believers, Paul wishes them to **Greet** each other in this situation. If possible, translate **Greet** as you did earlier in the verse. If you must translate it differently, use a word or phrase for "greeting" other people who are meeting together. Alternate translation: "Say hello to one another" or "Receive one another"

### with a holy kiss

Here, **a holy kiss** describes a **kiss** that believers would give to other believers (that is why it is **holy**). In Paul's culture, this was an appropriate way to greet someone with whom one was very close, such as a family member or a good friend. You could use a greeting that is used by close friends or family members and clarify that here it is used in a **holy** or Christian way. Alternate translation: "with a Christian hug" or "in warm way that is appropriate for fellow believers" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.780)**)

## 1 Corinthians 16:21

### This greeting {is} in my own hand

Paul concludes his letter by writing a final greeting to the Corinthians. Your language may have a particular way of sharing greetings in a letter. If so, you could use that form here. Alternate translation: “I ask to be remembered in my own hand” or “I send regards in my own hand”

### This greeting {is} in my own hand

In Paul’s culture, it was normal for a scribe to write down what the author of the letter was saying. Paul here indicates that he himself is writing these last words. He may mean just this verse, or he may mean the rest of the letter. The phrase **in my own hand** means that it was Paul’s “own hand” that took up the pen and wrote. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind **in my own hand** by using a comparable expression or include any extra information needed to make it clear. Alternate translation: “This greeting is in my handwriting” or “I write this greeting myself” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.626)**)

### Paul

Here, **Paul** speaks of himself in the third person. He does this to sign his name to the letter, which shows that the letter is from **Paul** himself and carries his authority. If your language has a specific form for signing letters or documents, you could use it here. Alternate translation: “I am Paul” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.687)**)

## 1 Corinthians 16:22

### If anyone does not love the Lord

Here Paul speaks as **If** some people do **not love the Lord**, but he knows that this is true for some people. He uses **If** to identify these people as the ones that he is addressing. If your language does not use **If** to identify a certain group of people, you can use a form that does do this. Alternate translation: "Whoever does not love the Lord" (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.648)**)

### let him be

Although **him** is masculine, Paul is using this word to refer to anyone, whether man or woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express **him** with a non gendered word or refer to both genders. Alternate translation: "let him or her be" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.785)**)

### let him be

Here Paul uses a third-person imperative. If you have third-person imperatives in your language, you could use one here. If you do not have third-person imperatives, you could express the idea using a word or phrase such as "should" or "may." Alternate translation: "he should be accursed" or "may he be accursed" (See: **Third-Person Imperatives (p.777)**)

### let him be accursed

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Paul uses the passive form here to emphasize the person who is **accursed** rather than the one doing the "cursing." If you must state who does the action, Paul implies that "God" does it. Alternate translation: "let God curse him" or "let him be under a curse" (See: **Active or Passive (p.621)**)

### Maranatha

This is an Aramaic word. Paul spelled it out using Greek letters so his readers would know how it sounded. He assumes that they know that it means "Lord, come!" In your translation, you could spell it the way it sounds in your language. If your readers would not know what **Maranatha** means, you could also explain its meaning. Alternate translation: "Maranatha, which means, 'Come Lord!'" (See: **Copy or Borrow Words (p.666)**)

## 1 Corinthians 16:23

### The grace of the Lord Jesus {be} with you

As was customary in his culture, Paul closes his letter with a blessing for the Corinthians. Use a form that people would recognize as a blessing in your language. Alternate translation: “May you experience kindness from the Lord Jesus within you” or “I pray that you will have grace from the Lord Jesus” (See: **Blessings (p.633)**)

### The grace of the Lord Jesus {be} with you

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **grace**, you can express by using an adjective such as “gracious” or an adverb such as “graciously.” Alternate translation: “May the Lord Jesus act graciously toward you” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

## 1 Corinthians 16:24

### My love {be} with you all

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind **love**, you can express by using a verb such as “love” or an adverb such as “lovingly.” Alternate translation: “May I act lovingly toward you all” or “I love you all” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.618)**)

### be} with

Here Paul could imply the verb **{be}** (which indicates a wish or blessing) or the verb “is” (which indicates what is true). In either case, Paul’s point is that he intends to show **love** to them. Use a word or phrase that indicates a closing blessing or statement of love in your language. Alternate translation: “to” or “will be with” (See: **Ellipsis (p. 678)**)

### in Christ Jesus

Here Paul uses the spatial metaphor **in Christ Jesus** to describe the union of believers with Christ. In this case, being **in Christ Jesus**, or united to Christ, identifies Paul’s **love** as something that he does because both he and the Corinthians are united to Christ. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this figure of speech with a comparable metaphor or express the idea plainly. Alternate translation: “in our union with the Lord” or “as fellow believers” (See: **Metaphor (p.730)**)

### Amen

Many early manuscripts include **Amen** here. However some early manuscripts do not include it, and it is possible that scribes added it because some letters end with **Amen**. Consider whether translations your readers might be familiar with include **Amen** here or not. If there is no strong reason to choose one option over the other, you could follow the ULT. (See: **Textual Variants (p.775)**)

### Amen

**Amen** is a Hebrew word. Paul spelled it out using Greek letters so his readers would know how it sounded. He assumes that they know that it means “so be it” or “yes indeed.” In your translation, you could spell it the way it sounds in your language. If your readers would not know what **Amen** means, you could also explain its meaning. Alternate translation: “Amen, which means, ‘So be it!’” (See: **Copy or Borrow Words (p.666)**)





# **unfoldingWord® Translation Academy**

**Version 85**

# 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:

*Parts of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Sentence Structure* ([UTA PDF](#))

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**.

"

**Referenced in:** 1 Corinthians 1:5; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 1 Corinthians 1:18; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Corinthians 2:3; 1 Corinthians 2:4; 1 Corinthians 2:5; 1 Corinthians 2:6; 1 Corinthians 2:7; 1 Corinthians 3:3; 1 Corinthians 3:7; 1 Corinthians 3:19; 1 Corinthians 3:20; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 1 Corinthians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 4:19; 1 Corinthians 4:20; 1 Corinthians 4:21; 1 Corinthians 5:3; 1 Corinthians 5:4; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Corinthians 5:8; 1 Corinthians 6:5; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Corinthians 6:13; 1 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Corinthians 6:18; 1 Corinthians 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:4; 1 Corinthians 7:5; 1 Corinthians 7:6; 1 Corinthians 7:9; 1 Corinthians 7:15; 1 Corinthians 7:18; 1 Corinthians 7:19; 1 Corinthians 7:25; 1 Corinthians 7:28; 1 Corinthians 7:35; 1 Corinthians 7:37; 1 Corinthians 7:40; 1 Corinthians 8:1; 1 Corinthians 8:7; 1 Corinthians 8:9; 1 Corinthians 8:10; 1 Corinthians 8:11; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 1 Corinthians 9:2; 1 Corinthians 9:3; 1 Corinthians 9:4; 1 Corinthians 9:5; 1 Corinthians 9:6; 1 Corinthians 9:10; 1 Corinthians 9:12; 1 Corinthians 9:15; 1 Corinthians 9:16; 1 Corinthians 9:17; 1 Corinthians 9:18; 1 Corinthians 9:23; 1 Corinthians 10:8; 1 Corinthians 10:11; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 Corinthians 10:14; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 1 Corinthians 10:22; 1 Corinthians 10:28; 1 Corinthians 10:29; 1 Corinthians 10:30; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 1 Corinthians 10:32; 1 Corinthians 10:33; 1 Corinthians 11:2; 1 Corinthians 11:7; 1 Corinthians 11:10; 1 Corinthians 11:14; 1 Corinthians 11:15; 1 Corinthians

11:24; 1 Corinthians 11:25; 1 Corinthians 11:26; 1 Corinthians 11:29; 1 Corinthians 11:34; 1 Corinthians 12:4; 1 Corinthians 12:5; 1 Corinthians 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:8; 1 Corinthians 12:9; 1 Corinthians 12:10; 1 Corinthians 12:23; 1 Corinthians 12:24; 1 Corinthians 12:25; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 1 Corinthians 13:1; 1 Corinthians 13:2; 1 Corinthians 13:3; 1 Corinthians 13:6; 1 Corinthians 13:8; 1 Corinthians 13:13; 1 Corinthians 14:1; 1 Corinthians 14:2; 1 Corinthians 14:3; 1 Corinthians 14:6; 1 Corinthians 14:11; 1 Corinthians 14:16; 1 Corinthians 14:22; 1 Corinthians 14:26; 1 Corinthians 14:33; 1 Corinthians 14:37; 1 Corinthians 15:10; 1 Corinthians 15:12; 1 Corinthians 15:13; 1 Corinthians 15:14; 1 Corinthians 15:17; 1 Corinthians 15:19; 1 Corinthians 15:21; 1 Corinthians 15:24; 1 Corinthians 15:26; 1 Corinthians 15:30; 1 Corinthians 15:34; 1 Corinthians 15:40; 1 Corinthians 15:41; 1 Corinthians 15:42; 1 Corinthians 15:43; 1 Corinthians 15:49; 1 Corinthians 15:51; 1 Corinthians 15:53; 1 Corinthians 15:54; 1 Corinthians 15:55; 1 Corinthians 15:56; 1 Corinthians 15:57; 1 Corinthians 15:58; 1 Corinthians 16:10; 1 Corinthians 16:11; 1 Corinthians 16:12; 1 Corinthians 16:13; 1 Corinthians 16:14; 1 Corinthians 16:15; 1 Corinthians 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:23; 1 Corinthians 16:24

## 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:

*Sentence Structure* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Verbs* ([UTA PDF](#))

## 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 \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Word Order \(UTA PDF\)](#)

**Referenced in:** 1 Corinthians 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Corinthians 1:4; 1 Corinthians 1:5; 1 Corinthians 1:6; 1 Corinthians 1:9; 1 Corinthians 1:11; 1 Corinthians 1:13; 1 Corinthians 1:15; 1 Corinthians 1:17; 1 Corinthians 1:18; 1 Corinthians 1:19; 1 Corinthians 1:23; 1 Corinthians 1:24; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Corinthians 1:31; 1 Corinthians 2:2; 1 Corinthians 2:7; 1 Corinthians 2:9; 1 Corinthians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 1 Corinthians 2:15; 1 Corinthians 3:10; 1 Corinthians 3:11; 1 Corinthians 3:13; 1 Corinthians 3:15; 1 Corinthians 3:19; 1 Corinthians 4:2; 1 Corinthians 4:3; 1 Corinthians 4:4; 1 Corinthians 4:6; 1 Corinthians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 4:12; 1 Corinthians 4:13; 1 Corinthians 4:18; 1 Corinthians 4:19; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 1 Corinthians 5:2; 1 Corinthians 5:4; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 1 Corinthians 6:2; 1 Corinthians 6:7; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 1 Corinthians 6:12; 1 Corinthians 6:16; 1 Corinthians 6:17; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Corinthians 7:10; 1 Corinthians 7:11; 1 Corinthians 7:14; 1 Corinthians 7:15; 1 Corinthians 7:18; 1 Corinthians 7:20; 1 Corinthians 7:21; 1 Corinthians 7:22; 1 Corinthians 7:23; 1 Corinthians 7:24; 1 Corinthians 7:25; 1 Corinthians 7:27; 1 Corinthians 7:29; 1 Corinthians 7:32; 1 Corinthians 7:33; 1 Corinthians 7:34; 1 Corinthians 7:39; 1 Corinthians 8:1; 1 Corinthians 8:3; 1 Corinthians 8:4; 1 Corinthians 8:7; 1 Corinthians 8:10; 1 Corinthians 8:11; 1 Corinthians 9:9; 1 Corinthians 9:10; 1 Corinthians 9:15; 1 Corinthians 9:16; 1 Corinthians 9:17; 1 Corinthians 9:27; 1 Corinthians 10:2; 1 Corinthians 10:5; 1 Corinthians 10:7; 1 Corinthians 10:9; 1 Corinthians 10:10; 1 Corinthians 10:11; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 Corinthians 10:14; 1 Corinthians 10:19; 1 Corinthians 10:25; 1 Corinthians 10:27; 1 Corinthians 10:28; 1 Corinthians 10:29; 1 Corinthians 10:30; 1 Corinthians 10:33; 1 Corinthians 11:5; 1 Corinthians 11:6; 1 Corinthians 11:9; 1 Corinthians 11:15; 1 Corinthians 11:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23; 1 Corinthians 11:31; 1 Corinthians 11:32; 1 Corinthians 12:2; 1 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:8; 1 Corinthians 12:13; 1 Corinthians 12:26; 1 Corinthians 13:5; 1 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Corinthians 14:7; 1 Corinthians 14:9; 1 Corinthians 14:17; 1 Corinthians 14:21; 1 Corinthians 14:24; 1 Corinthians 14:30; 1 Corinthians 14:31; 1 Corinthians 14:32; 1 Corinthians 14:40; 1 Corinthians 15:2; 1 Corinthians 15:4; 1 Corinthians 15:5; 1 Corinthians 15:6; 1 Corinthians 15:7; 1 Corinthians 15:8; 1 Corinthians 15:9; 1 Corinthians 15:12; 1 Corinthians 15:13; 1 Corinthians 15:14; 1 Corinthians 15:15; 1 Corinthians 15:16; 1 Corinthians 15:17; 1 Corinthians 15:20; 1 Corinthians 15:22; 1 Corinthians 15:26; 1 Corinthians 15:28; 1 Corinthians 15:29; 1 Corinthians 15:33; 1 Corinthians 15:35; 1 Corinthians 15:36; 1 Corinthians 15:42; 1 Corinthians 15:43; 1 Corinthians 15:44; 1 Corinthians 15:45; 1 Corinthians 15:51; 1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Corinthians 15:54; 1 Corinthians 15:58; 1 Corinthians 16:22

# Apostrophe

## Description

An apostrophe is a figure of speech in which a speaker turns his attention away from his listeners and speaks to someone or something that he knows cannot hear him. He does this to tell his listeners his message or feelings about that person or thing in a very strong way.

This page answers the question: *What is the figure of speech called an apostrophe?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

*Figures of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Many languages do not use apostrophe, and readers could be confused by it. They may wonder who the speaker is talking to, or think that the speaker is crazy to talk to things or people who cannot hear.

## Examples from the Bible

Mountains of Gilboa, let there not be dew or rain on you. (2 Samuel 1:21a ULT)

King Saul was killed on Mount Gilboa, and David sang a sad song about it. By telling these mountains that he wanted them to have no dew or rain, he showed how sad he was.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those sent to you. (Luke 13:34a ULT)

Jesus was expressing his feelings for the people of Jerusalem in front of his disciples and a group of Pharisees. By speaking directly to Jerusalem as though its people could hear him, Jesus showed how deeply he cared about them.

He cried against the altar by the word of Yahweh: "**Altar, altar!** This is what Yahweh says, 'See, ... on you they will burn human bones.'" (1 Kings 13:2 ULT)

The man of God spoke as if the altar could hear him, but he really wanted the king, who was standing there, to hear him.

## Translation Strategies

If apostrophe would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. But if this way of speaking would be confusing to your people, let the speaker continue speaking to the people that are listening to him as he tells **them** his message or feelings about the people or thing that cannot hear him. See the example below.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

He cried against the altar by the word of Yahweh: "**Altar, altar!** This is what Yahweh says, 'See, ... on you they will burn human bones.'" (1 Kings 13:2 ULT)

He said this about the altar: "This is what Yahweh says **about this altar**. 'See, ... they will burn people's bones on **it**.'"

**Mountains of Gilboa**, let there not be dew or rain on **you**. (2 Samuel 1:21a ULT)

**As for these mountains of Gilboa**, let there not be dew or rain on **them**.

"



**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 15:55](#)

## 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:

*Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit* ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** 1 Corinthians 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:11; 1 Corinthians 2:15; 1 Corinthians 3:4; 1 Corinthians 3:5; 1 Corinthians 3:13; 1 Corinthians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 3:22; 1 Corinthians 4:2; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 1 Corinthians 4:6; 1 Corinthians 4:12; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Corinthians 4:19; 1 Corinthians 4:20; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Corinthians 5:6; 1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Corinthians 5:8; 1 Corinthians 5:9; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 1 Corinthians 6:1; 1 Corinthians 6:12; 1 Corinthians 6:13; 1 Corinthians 6:16; 1 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Corinthians 7:7; 1 Corinthians 7:8; 1 Corinthians 7:14; 1 Corinthians 7:15; 1 Corinthians 7:29; 1 Corinthians 7:36; 1 Corinthians 7:40; 1 Corinthians 8:1; 1 Corinthians 8:4; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 1 Corinthians 8:7; 1 Corinthians 8:8; 1 Corinthians 8:9; 1 Corinthians 8:10; 1 Corinthians 8:11; 1 Corinthians 8:13; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 1 Corinthians 9:3; 1 Corinthians 9:4; 1 Corinthians 9:6; 1 Corinthians 9:12; 1 Corinthians 9:13; 1 Corinthians 9:14; 1 Corinthians 9:19; 1 Corinthians 9:25; 1 Corinthians 10:1; 1 Corinthians 10:2; 1 Corinthians 10:3; 1 Corinthians 10:4; 1 Corinthians 10:5; 1 Corinthians 10:7; 1 Corinthians 10:8; 1 Corinthians 10:9; 1 Corinthians 10:10; 1 Corinthians 10:18; 1 Corinthians 10:23; 1 Corinthians

10:25; 1 Corinthians 10:27; 1 Corinthians 10:28; 1 Corinthians 10:32; 1 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Corinthians 11:4; 1 Corinthians 11:5; 1 Corinthians 11:6; 1 Corinthians 11:7; 1 Corinthians 11:8; 1 Corinthians 11:9; 1 Corinthians 11:10; 1 Corinthians 11:12; 1 Corinthians 11:13; 1 Corinthians 11:16; 1 Corinthians 11:17; 1 Corinthians 11:19; 1 Corinthians 11:20; 1 Corinthians 11:21; 1 Corinthians 11:22; 1 Corinthians 11:23; 1 Corinthians 11:24; 1 Corinthians 11:26; 1 Corinthians 11:27; 1 Corinthians 11:31; 1 Corinthians 11:33; 1 Corinthians 11:34; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 1 Corinthians 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12:9; 1 Corinthians 12:10; 1 Corinthians 12:13; 1 Corinthians 12:19; 1 Corinthians 12:20; 1 Corinthians 12:22; 1 Corinthians 12:23; 1 Corinthians 12:24; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 1 Corinthians 12:30; 1 Corinthians 13:3; 1 Corinthians 13:7; 1 Corinthians 13:10; 1 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Corinthians 13:13; 1 Corinthians 14:5; 1 Corinthians 14:7; 1 Corinthians 14:8; 1 Corinthians 14:16; 1 Corinthians 14:21; 1 Corinthians 14:26; 1 Corinthians 14:27; 1 Corinthians 14:28; 1 Corinthians 14:29; 1 Corinthians 14:30; 1 Corinthians 14:31; 1 Corinthians 14:34; 1 Corinthians 14:35; 1 Corinthians 14:38; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 1 Corinthians 15:5; 1 Corinthians 15:8; 1 Corinthians 15:9; 1 Corinthians 15:10; 1 Corinthians 15:22; 1 Corinthians 15:23; 1 Corinthians 15:24; 1 Corinthians 15:25; 1 Corinthians 15:27; 1 Corinthians 15:28; 1 Corinthians 15:29; 1 Corinthians 15:30; 1 Corinthians 15:38; 1 Corinthians 15:40; 1 Corinthians 15:41; 1 Corinthians 15:47; 1 Corinthians 15:48; 1 Corinthians 15:49; 1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Corinthians 15:57; 1 Corinthians 16:1; 1 Corinthians 16:3; 1 Corinthians 16:4; 1 Corinthians 16:6; 1 Corinthians 16:9; 1 Corinthians 16:10; 1 Corinthians 16:11; 1 Corinthians 16:12; 1 Corinthians 16:13; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 1 Corinthians 16:21

## Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

An **extended metaphor** is an explicit metaphor that uses multiple images and multiple ideas at the same time. This is in contrast to a **simple metaphor**, which uses only a single Image and a single Idea. The difference between an extended metaphor and a **complex metaphor** is that an extended metaphor is explicitly stated by a writer/speaker, but a complex metaphor is not.

This page answers the question: *What is an extended metaphor?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

*Metaphor* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Simile* ([UTA PDF](#))

### Explanation of an Extended Metaphor

When using a metaphor, a writer/speaker uses a physical Image in order to express an abstract Idea about some immediate Topic, with at least one point of comparison between the Topic and the Image. In an extended metaphor, the writer/speaker explicitly states the Topic, and then describes multiple images and communicates multiple ideas.

In Isaiah 5:1b-7, the prophet Isaiah uses a vineyard (the **Image**) to express God's disappointment (the **Idea**) with the nation of Israel (the **Topic**) for their unfaithfulness to God and his covenant with them as his people. Farmers care for their gardens, and a farmer would feel disappointed if his vineyard produced bad fruit. If a vineyard produced only bad fruit for a long enough time, the farmer would eventually stop caring for it. We call this an extended metaphor because the prophet describes in detail multiple images relating to a vineyard as well as multiple aspects of God's disappointment.

1b My well beloved had a **vineyard** on a very fertile hill. 2 He **spaded it, removed the stones,** and **planted it** with an excellent kind of vine. He **built a tower** in the middle of it, and also **built a winepress**. He **waited for it to produce grapes, but it produced wild grapes**. 3 So now, inhabitant of Jerusalem and man of Judah; judge between me and my vineyard. 4 What more could have been done for my vineyard, that I have not done for it? **When I looked for it to produce grapes, why did it produce wild grapes?** 5 Now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard; I will remove the hedge; I will turn it into a pasture; I will break down its wall, and it will be trampled down. 6 I will lay it waste, and it will not be pruned nor hoed. Instead, briars and thorns will spring up. I will also command the clouds not to rain on it. 7 For **the vineyard of Yahweh of hosts is the house of Israel**, and the man of Judah his pleasant planting; **he waited for justice, but instead, there was killing; for righteousness, but, instead, a shout for help.** (Isa 5:1b-7 ULT)

### Other Examples From the Bible

In Psalm 23, the psalmist uses the physical **Image** of a shepherd to describe the way that God (the **Topic**) shows great concern and care (the **Idea**) for his people. The psalmist describes multiple aspects of what shepherds do for sheep (leads them to pasture and to water, protects them, etc.). The psalmist also describes multiple aspects of how God takes care of him (gives him life, righteousness, comfort, etc.). Shepherds give sheep what they need, take them to safe places, rescue them, guide them, and protect them. What God does for his people is like these actions.

1 Yahweh is my shepherd; I will lack nothing. 2 He **makes me** to lie down in green pastures; he **leads me** beside tranquil water. 3 He **brings back** my life; he **guides me** along right paths for his name's sake. 4 Even though I walk through a valley of darkest shadow, I will not fear harm since you are with me; your rod and your staff comfort me. (Psalm 23:1-4 ULT)

## Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- People may not realize that the images represent other things.
- People may not be familiar with the things that are used as images.
- Extended metaphors are often so profound that it would be impossible for a translator to show all of the meaning generated by the metaphor.

## Translation Principles

- Make the meaning of the extended metaphor as clear to the target audience as it was to the original audience.
- Do not make the meaning more clear to the target audience than it was to the original audience.
- When someone uses an extended metaphor, the images are an important part of what he is trying to say.
- If the target audience is not familiar with some of the images, you will need to find some way of helping them understand the images so that they can understand the whole extended metaphor.

## Translation Strategies

Consider using the same extended metaphor if your readers will understand it in the same way the original readers would have understood it. If not, here are some other strategies:

- (1) If the target audience would think that the images should be understood literally, translate the metaphor as a simile by using words such as “like” or “as.” It may be enough to do this in just the first sentence or two.
- (2) If the target audience would not know the image, find a way of translating it so they can understand what the image is.
- (3) If the target audience still would not understand, then state it clearly.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the target audience would think that the images should be understood literally, translate the metaphor as a simile by using words such as “like” or “as.” It may be enough to do this in just the first sentence or two. See Psalm 23:1-2 as an example:

Yahweh is **my shepherd**; I will lack nothing. He makes **me** to lie down in green pastures; **he leads me** beside tranquil water. (ULT)

Can be translated as:

“Yahweh is **like** a shepherd to me, so I will lack nothing. **Like** a shepherd who makes his sheep lie down in green pastures and leads them by peaceful waters, Yahweh helps me to rest peacefully.”

- (2) If the target audience would not know the image, find a way of translating it so they can understand what the image is.

My well beloved had a **vineyard** on a very fertile hill. He **spaded** it, removed the stones, and planted it with **an excellent kind of vine**. He built a **tower** in the middle of it, and also built a **winepress**. He waited for it to produce grapes, but it only produced **wild grapes**. (Isaiah 5:1b-2 ULT)

May be translated as:

My well beloved had a **grapevine garden** on a very fertile hill. He **dug up the ground** and removed the stones, and planted it with **the best grapevines**. He built a **watchtower** in the middle of it, and also built a **tank where he could crush the juice out of the grapes**. He

waited for it to produce grapes, but it produced **wild grapes that were not good for making wine**.

(3) If the target audience still would not understand, then state it clearly.

Yahweh is **my shepherd**; I will lack nothing. (Psalm 23:1 ULT)

"Yahweh **cares for me** like a shepherd that cares for his sheep, so I will lack nothing."

For the vineyard of Yahweh of hosts **is** the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant planting; he waited for justice, but instead, there was killing; for righteousness, but, instead, a shout for help. (Isaiah 5:7 ULT)

Can be translated as:

For the vineyard of Yahweh of hosts **represents** the house of Israel, and the men of Judah **are like** his pleasant planting; he waited for justice, but instead, there was killing; for righteousness, but, instead, a cry for help.

or as:

**So as a farmer stops caring for a grapevine garden that produces bad fruit, Yahweh will stop protecting** Israel and Judah, **because they do not do what is right**. He waited for justice, but instead, there was killing; for righteousness, but, instead, a cry for help.

Next we recommend you learn about:

*Biblical Imagery — Common Patterns* ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** [Introduction to 1 Corinthians](#); [1 Corinthians 3 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 3:6](#); [1 Corinthians 3:7](#); [1 Corinthians 3:8](#); [1 Corinthians 3:9](#); [1 Corinthians 3:10](#); [1 Corinthians 3:11](#); [1 Corinthians 3:12](#); [1 Corinthians 3:13](#); [1 Corinthians 3:14](#); [1 Corinthians 3:15](#); [1 Corinthians 3:16](#); [1 Corinthians 3:17](#); [1 Corinthians 4:15](#); [1 Corinthians 5:6](#); [1 Corinthians 5:7](#); [1 Corinthians 5:8](#); [1 Corinthians 9:24](#); [1 Corinthians 9:26](#)



# 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:

*Writing Styles* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Poetry* ([UTA PDF](#))

## 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."

"

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:3](#); [1 Corinthians 16:23](#)

## 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.

"

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 2:9](#); [1 Corinthians 6:19](#); [1 Corinthians 8:7](#)

## 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 <b>in those days</b> ;
Background repeated	there was no frequent prophetic vision.
Introduction of main event	<b>At that time, when</b> Eli
Background	<b>whose</b> 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 <b>had not yet</b> gone out,
Simultaneous background	<b>and</b> Samuel was lying down to sleep in the temple of Yahweh,
Simultaneous background	where the ark of God was.
Main event	<b>Yahweh called to Samuel,</b>
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.

"

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 2:1](#)



## Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions

### Conditional Relationships

This page answers the question: *How can I translate contrary-to-fact 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.

### Contrary-to-Fact Conditions

#### Description

A Contrary-to-Fact Condition is a condition that sounds hypothetical, but the speaker is already certain that it is NOT true.

#### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Usually there are no special words that indicate a Contrary-to-Fact Condition. The writer assumes that the reader knows that it is NOT a true condition. For this reason it often requires knowledge of implied information to know that it is not true. If this kind of condition is difficult for translators to communicate, they may want to consider using the same strategies that they used for [Rhetorical Questions](#) or [Implied Information](#).

#### Examples From OBS and the Bible

But **if Baal 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)

Baal is not God. Elijah is not suggesting that Baal might be God, and he does not want the people to follow Baal. But Elijah used a conditional statement to show them that what they were doing was wrong. In the example above, we see two conditions that have the same construction. The first one, “If Yahweh is God,” is a Factual Condition because Elijah is certain that it is true. The second one, “if Baal is God,” is a Contrary-to-Fact Condition because Elijah is certain that it is not true. You will need to consider if people would say both of these in the same way in your language or if they would say them in different ways.

But his wife replied to him, “**If Yahweh had desired to kill us**, he would not have taken from our hand the whole burnt offering and the offering. He would not have shown us all these things, and at this time would he have not allowed us to hear about this.” (Judges 13:23 ULT)

Manoah’s wife thinks that the second part of her conditional statement is not true, therefore the first part is also not true. God received their burnt offering; therefore, He does not want to kill them.

“**If only we had died** by Yahweh’s hand in the land of Egypt, sitting by a pot of meat and eating bread to the full.” (Exodus 16b:3 ULT)

Of course the people speaking here did not die in Egypt, and so this is a Contrary-to-Fact condition that is used to express a wish.

“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)

The English reader knows that these last two examples are Contrary-to-Fact conditions because of the past-tense verbs used in the first part (they are not things that might happen). The last example also has a second part that uses “would have.” These words also signal something that did not happen.

## Translation Strategies

If Contrary-to-Fact conditions are clear in your language, then use them as they are.

- (1) If the condition leads the reader to think that the speaker believes something that is false, then restate the condition as something that others believe.
- (2) If the condition leads the reader to think that the speaker is suggesting that the first part is true, then restate it as a statement that it is not true.
- (3) If the condition is expressing something that did not happen but the speaker wanted it to happen, restate it as a wish.
- (4) If the condition is expressing something that did not happen, restate it as a negative statement.
- (5) Often Factual and Contrary-to-Fact conditions are used to make reasoned arguments for a change in behavior. If translators are struggling to know the best way to translate them, it could be helpful to discuss how this is done in their language community. If someone is trying to convince people to change their behavior, how do they do that? It may be possible to adapt similar strategies when translating these conditions.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the condition leads the reader to think that the speaker believes something that is false, then restate the condition as something that others believe.

But **if Baal is God**, worship him! (Story 19 Frame 6 OBS)

If you believe that Baal is God, then worship him!

- (2) If the condition leads the reader to think that the speaker is suggesting that the first part is true, then restate it as a statement that it is not true.

If Baal is not God, then you should not worship him!

But his wife replied to him, “**If Yahweh had desired to kill us**, he would not have taken from our hand the whole burnt offering and the offering. He would not have shown us all these things, and at this time would he have not allowed us to hear about this.” (Judges 13:23 ULT)

“**Yahweh does not want to kill us**, or he would not have received the burnt offering and the offering we gave him.”

- (3) If the condition is expressing something that did not happen but the speaker wanted it to happen, restate it as a wish.

“**If only we had died** by Yahweh’s hand in the land of Egypt, sitting by a pot of meat and eating bread to the full.” (Exodus 16b:3 ULT)

“**I wish we had died** by Yahweh’s hand in the land of Egypt...”

- (4) If the condition is expressing something that did not happen, restate it as a negative statement.

“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)

“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! The mighty deeds which were done in you **were not done** in Tyre and Sidon. But **if they had been**

**done there, those people would have repented** long ago in sackcloth and ashes.”

(5) Often Factual and Contrary-to-Fact Conditions are used to make reasoned arguments for a change in behavior. If translators are struggling to know the best way to translate them, it could be helpful to discuss how this is done in their language community. If someone is trying to convince people to change their behavior, how do they do that? It may be possible to adapt similar strategies when translating these conditions.

But **if Baal is God**, worship him! (Story 19 Frame 6 OBS)

Is Baal the one who is truly God? Should you worship him?

“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)

“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! You think that you are better than Tyre and Sidon, but you are not! **They would have repented** long ago in sackcloth and ashes at seeing the mighty deeds that you have seen! **You should be like them!**”

”

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 2:8](#); [1 Corinthians 4:15](#); [1 Corinthians 4:18](#); [1 Corinthians 5:3](#); [1 Corinthians 5:10](#); [1 Corinthians 7:14](#); [1 Corinthians 8:5](#); [1 Corinthians 9:16](#); [1 Corinthians 11:31](#); [1 Corinthians 14:7](#); [1 Corinthians 14:8](#); [1 Corinthians 15 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 15:13](#); [1 Corinthians 15:14](#); [1 Corinthians 15:15](#); [1 Corinthians 15:16](#); [1 Corinthians 15:17](#); [1 Corinthians 15:19](#); [1 Corinthians 15:29](#); [1 Corinthians 15:32](#)

## 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.

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**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:23](#); [1 Corinthians 1:24](#); [1 Corinthians 1:27](#); [1 Corinthians 2:6](#); [1 Corinthians 2:9](#); [1 Corinthians 2:14](#); [1 Corinthians 3:2](#); [1 Corinthians 3:6](#); [1 Corinthians 4:4](#); [1 Corinthians 4:19](#); [1 Corinthians 6:8](#); [1 Corinthians 7:10](#); [1 Corinthians 7:12](#); [1 Corinthians 7:14](#); [1 Corinthians 7:28](#); [1 Corinthians 8:8](#); [1 Corinthians 9:19](#); [1 Corinthians 9:20](#); [1 Corinthians 9:27](#); [1 Corinthians 11:11](#); [1 Corinthians 11:17](#); [1 Corinthians 12:12](#); [1 Corinthians 12:18](#); [1 Corinthians 12:20](#); [1 Corinthians 15:2](#); [1 Corinthians 15:20](#); [1 Corinthians 15:29](#); [1 Corinthians 15:35](#)

## Connect — Exception Clauses

### Exceptional Relationship

This page answers the question: *How can I translate exception clauses?*

### Description

Exceptional relationship connectors exclude one or more items or people from a group.

### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

English indicates exceptional relationships by first describing a group (Part 1) and then stating what is not in that group by using words like “except,” “but not,” “other than,” “besides,” “unless,” “however ... not,” and “only” (Part 2). Some languages do not indicate in this way that one or more items or people are excluded from a group. Instead, they have other ways of doing this. In some languages this type of construction does not make sense because the exception in Part 2 seems to contradict the statement in Part 1. Translators need to understand who (or what) is in the group and who (or what) is excluded in order to be able to accurately communicate this in their language.

### Examples From OBS and the Bible

God told Adam that he could eat from **any** tree in the garden **except** from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (OBS Story 1 Frame 11)

But if you will not redeem it, then tell me so that I may know, for there is **no one** to redeem it **besides** you, and I am after you. (Ruth 4:4b ULT)

David attacked them from the twilight to the evening of the next day. **Not** a man escaped **except for** 400 young men, who rode on camels and fled. (1 Samuel 30:17 ULT)

The man said, “Let me go, for the dawn is breaking.” Jacob said, “I will **not** let you go **unless** you bless me.” (Genesis 32:26 ULT)

### Translation Strategies

If the way that Exceptional Clauses are marked in the source language is also clear in your language, then translate the Exceptional Clauses in the same way.

- (1) Very often, the exception in Part 2 contradicts something that was negated in Part 1. In this case, the translator can phrase the same idea without the contradiction by deleting the negative and using a word like “**only**.”
- (2) Reverse the order of the clauses so that the exception is stated first, and then the larger group is named second.

### Examples of Translation Strategy Applied

- (1) Very often, the exception in Part 2 contradicts something that was negated in Part 1. In this case, the translator can phrase the same idea without the contradiction by deleting the negative and using a word like “**only**.”

David attacked them from the twilight to the evening of the next day. **Not a man escaped except for 400 young men**, who rode on camels and fled. (1 Samuel 30:17 ULT)

- Part 1: (**Not** a man escaped)
- Part 2: (**except for** 400 young men)

David attacked them from the twilight to the evening of the next day. **Only** 400 young men escaped; they rode on camels and fled.

But if you will not redeem it, then tell me so that I may know, for there is **no one** to redeem it **besides** you, and I am after you. (Ruth 4:4 ULT)

But if you will not redeem it, then tell me so that I may know, for **you are first in line to redeem it {only you can redeem it}**, and I am after you.

The man said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." Jacob said, "I will **not** let you go **unless** you bless me." (Genesis 32:26 ULT)

The man said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." Jacob said, "I will let you go **only if** you bless me."

(2) Reverse the order of the clauses, so that the exception is stated first, and then the larger group is named second.

God told Adam that he could eat from **any** tree in the garden **except** from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (OBS Story 1 Frame 11)

God told Adam that he could **not** eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but he could eat from **any other** tree in the garden.

"

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:14](#); [1 Corinthians 2:2](#); [1 Corinthians 2:11](#); [1 Corinthians 6:18](#); [1 Corinthians 7:5](#); [1 Corinthians 7:39](#); [1 Corinthians 8:4](#); [1 Corinthians 10:13](#); [1 Corinthians 12:3](#); [1 Corinthians 14:5](#); [1 Corinthians 14:6](#); [1 Corinthians 15:36](#)

## 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?”

”

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 3:12](#); [1 Corinthians 4:7](#); [1 Corinthians 6:2](#); [1 Corinthians 8:10](#); [1 Corinthians 8:13](#); [1 Corinthians 9:11](#); [1 Corinthians 9:12](#); [1 Corinthians 9:16](#); [1 Corinthians 10:15](#); [1 Corinthians 10:31](#); [1 Corinthians 11:6](#); [1 Corinthians 13:8](#); [1 Corinthians 14:27](#); [1 Corinthians 14:28](#); [1 Corinthians 14:37](#); [1 Corinthians 14:38](#); [1 Corinthians 15:12](#); [1 Corinthians 15:32](#); [1 Corinthians 15:44](#); [1 Corinthians 16:10](#); [1 Corinthians 16:22](#)

## 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.**

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**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:15](#); [1 Corinthians 1:17](#); [1 Corinthians 1:27](#); [1 Corinthians 1:28](#); [1 Corinthians 1:29](#); [1 Corinthians 2:7](#); [1 Corinthians 3:18](#); [1 Corinthians 4:14](#); [1 Corinthians 5:2](#); [1 Corinthians 5:5](#); [1 Corinthians 7:5](#); [1 Corinthians 10:13](#)

## Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

### Conditional Relationships

This page answers the question: *How can I translate hypothetical 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.

### Hypothetical Condition

#### Description

A Hypothetical Condition is a condition in which the second event (the “then” clause) will only take place if the first event (the “if” clause) takes place or is fulfilled in some way. Sometimes what takes place is dependent on the actions of other people.

#### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

It is important that translators understand whether or not something is a Hypothetical Condition so that they translate it in the correct way. For example, some of God’s promises to Israel were conditional, based on whether or not Israel obeyed God. However, many of God’s promises to Israel were not conditional; God would keep these promises whether or not the Israelites obeyed. It is important that you (the translator) know the difference between these two types of promises and communicate each one accurately in your own language. Also, sometimes conditions are stated in an order different than the order in which they would happen. If the target language would state the clauses in a different order, then you will need to make that adjustment.

#### Examples From OBS and the Bible

God promised to bless the people and protect them, **if** they obeyed these laws. But he said he would punish them **if** they did not obey them (Story 13 Frame 7 OBS)

There are two hypothetical conditions in this frame. In both of these conditions, the first event (the “if clause”) is stated after the “then” clause. If this is unnatural or confusing, the clauses can be restated in the more natural order. The first hypothetical condition is: if the Israelites obeyed God, then God would bless and protect them. The second hypothetical condition is: if the Israelites did not obey God, then God would punish them.

If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? (Genesis 4:7a ULT)

If Cain does what is right, then he will be accepted. The only way for Cain to be accepted is by doing what is right.

... **if** this plan or this work is of men, it will be overthrown. But **if** it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. (Acts 5:38b-39aULT)

There are two hypothetical conditions here: (1) If it is true that this plan is of men, then it will be overthrown; (2) If it is true that this plan is of God, then it cannot be overthrown.

#### Translation Strategies

- (1) If the order of clauses makes the hypothetical condition confusing, then change the order of the clauses.
- (2) If it is not clear where the second event is, mark that part with a word like “then.”

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the order of clauses makes the hypothetical condition confusing, then change the order of the clauses.

God promised to bless the people and protect them **if** they obeyed these laws. But he said he would punish them **if** they did not obey them. (Story 13 Frame 7 OBS)

If the people obeyed these laws, God promised he would bless them and protect them. But **if** they did not obey these laws, God said that he would punish them.

- (2) If it is not clear where the second event is, mark that part with a word like “then.”

God promised to bless the people and protect them, **if** they obeyed these laws. But he said he would punish them **if** they did not obey them. (Story 13 Frame 7 OBS)

If the people obeyed these laws, **then** God promised he would bless them and protect them. But **if** they did not obey these laws, **then** God said that he would punish them.

... **if** this plan or this work is of men, it will be overthrown. But **if** it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; (Acts 5:38b-39a ULT)

... **if** this plan or this work is of men, **then** it will be overthrown. But **if** it is of God, **then** you will not be able to overthrow them;

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**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:16](#); [1 Corinthians 3:14](#); [1 Corinthians 3:15](#); [1 Corinthians 3:17](#); [1 Corinthians 3:18](#); [1 Corinthians 4:19](#); [1 Corinthians 6:4](#); [1 Corinthians 7:8](#); [1 Corinthians 7:9](#); [1 Corinthians 7:11](#); [1 Corinthians 7:12](#); [1 Corinthians 7:13](#); [1 Corinthians 7:15](#); [1 Corinthians 7:21](#); [1 Corinthians 7:28](#); [1 Corinthians 7:36](#); [1 Corinthians 7:39](#); [1 Corinthians 8:2](#); [1 Corinthians 8:3](#); [1 Corinthians 8:8](#); [1 Corinthians 9:2](#); [1 Corinthians 9:11](#); [1 Corinthians 9:17](#); [1 Corinthians 10:27](#); [1 Corinthians 10:28](#); [1 Corinthians 10:30](#); [1 Corinthians 11:6](#); [1 Corinthians 11:14](#); [1 Corinthians 11:15](#); [1 Corinthians 11:16](#); [1 Corinthians 11:34](#); [1 Corinthians 12:26](#); [1 Corinthians 14:11](#); [1 Corinthians 14:14](#); [1 Corinthians 14:16](#); [1 Corinthians 14:30](#); [1 Corinthians 14:35](#); [1 Corinthians 15:2](#); [1 Corinthians 16:4](#)

## 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.

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**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:6](#); [1 Corinthians 1:7](#); [1 Corinthians 1:8](#); [1 Corinthians 1:11](#); [1 Corinthians 1:17](#); [1 Corinthians 1:18](#); [1 Corinthians 1:21](#); [1 Corinthians 1:25](#); [1 Corinthians 1:31](#); [1 Corinthians 3:7](#); [1 Corinthians 3:11](#); [1 Corinthians 4:14](#); [1 Corinthians 5:3](#); [1 Corinthians 5:5](#); [1 Corinthians 5:7](#); [1 Corinthians 5:12](#); [1 Corinthians 6:3](#); 1



Corinthians 7:5; 1 Corinthians 7:14; 1 Corinthians 7:22; 1 Corinthians 7:29; 1 Corinthians 9:10; 1 Corinthians 10:1; 1 Corinthians 10:8; 1 Corinthians 10:9; 1 Corinthians 10:10; 1 Corinthians 10:25; 1 Corinthians 10:27; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 1 Corinthians 11:7; 1 Corinthians 11:8; 1 Corinthians 11:9; 1 Corinthians 11:10; 1 Corinthians 11:19; 1 Corinthians 11:20; 1 Corinthians 11:34; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 1 Corinthians 13:2; 1 Corinthians 13:3; 1 Corinthians 13:9; 1 Corinthians 14:2; 1 Corinthians 14:12; 1 Corinthians 14:31; 1 Corinthians 14:33; 1 Corinthians 14:39; 1 Corinthians 15:16; 1 Corinthians 15:21; 1 Corinthians 15:45; 1 Corinthians 15:58; 1 Corinthians 16:7

## 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](#).

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**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 15:23](#); [1 Corinthians 15:46](#)

## 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.

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**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:7](#); [1 Corinthians 2:1](#); [1 Corinthians 2:13](#); [1 Corinthians 4:12](#); [1 Corinthians 4:13](#); [1 Corinthians 5:4](#); [1 Corinthians 6:1](#); [1 Corinthians 8:7](#); [1 Corinthians 8:12](#); [1 Corinthians 9:18](#); [1 Corinthians 11:4](#); [1 Corinthians 11:32](#); [1 Corinthians 11:33](#); [1 Corinthians 14:15](#)

## 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.

”

**Referenced in:** 1 Corinthians 1:5; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 1 Corinthians 1:12; 1 Corinthians 1:16; 1 Corinthians 1:19; 1 Corinthians 1:22; 1 Corinthians 1:26; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Corinthians 2:1; 1 Corinthians 2:3; 1 Corinthians 2:8; 1 Corinthians 2:10; 1 Corinthians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 2:16; 1 Corinthians 3:1; 1 Corinthians 3:4; 1 Corinthians 3:5; 1 Corinthians 3:8; 1 Corinthians 3:9; 1 Corinthians 3:12; 1 Corinthians 4:2; 1 Corinthians 4:3; 1 Corinthians 4:9; 1 Corinthians 4:18; 1 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Corinthians 6:2; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Corinthians 6:13; 1 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Corinthians 6:19; 1 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Corinthians 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:7; 1 Corinthians 7:15; 1 Corinthians 7:17; 1 Corinthians 7:25; 1 Corinthians 7:26; 1 Corinthians 8:1; 1 Corinthians 8:4; 1 Corinthians 9:6; 1 Corinthians 9:8; 1 Corinthians 9:10; 1 Corinthians 9:19; 1 Corinthians 9:23; 1 Corinthians 10:11; 1 Corinthians 10:20; 1 Corinthians 10:22; 1 Corinthians 10:29; 1 Corinthians 11:2; 1 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Corinthians 11:7; 1 Corinthians 11:22; 1 Corinthians 12:1; 1 Corinthians 12:21; 1 Corinthians 12:27; 1 Corinthians 13:13; 1 Corinthians 14:1; 1 Corinthians 14:6; 1 Corinthians 14:8; 1 Corinthians 14:11; 1 Corinthians 14:29; 1 Corinthians 14:36; 1 Corinthians 15:1; 1 Corinthians 15:18; 1 Corinthians 15:25; 1 Corinthians 15:30; 1 Corinthians 15:41; 1 Corinthians 15:42; 1 Corinthians 15:46; 1 Corinthians 15:56; 1 Corinthians 16:1; 1 Corinthians 16:5; 1 Corinthians 16:9; 1 Corinthians 16:12; 1 Corinthians 16:15; 1 Corinthians 16:17

## Copy or Borrow Words

### Description

Sometimes the Bible includes things that are not part of your culture and for which your language may not have a word. The Bible also includes people and places for which you may not have names.

When that happens you can “borrow” the word from the Bible in a familiar language and use it in your translation in your own language. This means that you basically copy it from the other language. This page tells how to “borrow” words. (There are also other ways to translate words for things that are not in your language. See [Translate Unknowns](#).)

This page answers the question: *What does it mean to borrow words from another language and how can I do it?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Translate Unknowns \(UTA PDF\)](#)

### Examples From the Bible

Seeing one fig tree along the roadside, he went to it. (Matthew 21:19a ULT)

If there are no fig trees where your language is spoken, there might not be a name for this kind of tree in your language.

Above him were the **seraphim**; each one had six wings; with two each covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. (Isaiah 6:2 ULT)

Your language might not have a name for this kind of creature.

The declaration of the word of Yahweh to Israel by the hand of **Malachi**. (Malachi 1:1 ULT)

Malachi might not be a name that people who speak your language use.

### Translation Strategies

There are several things to be aware of when borrowing words from another language.

- Different languages use different scripts, such as the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Cyrillic, Devanagari, and Korean scripts. These scripts use different shapes to represent the letters in their alphabets.
- Languages that use the same script might pronounce the letters in that script differently. For example, when speaking German, people pronounce the letter “j” the same way that people pronounce the letter “y” when speaking English.
- Languages do not all have the same sounds or combinations of sounds. For example, many languages do not have the soft “th” sound in the English word “think,” and some languages cannot start a word with a combination of sounds like “st” as in “stop.”

There are several ways to borrow a word.

- (1) If your language uses a different script from the language you are translating from, you can simply substitute each letter shape with the corresponding letter shape of the script of your language.
- (2) You can spell the word as the Other Language spells it, and pronounce it the way your language normally pronounces those letters.
- (3) You can pronounce the word similarly to the way the Other Language does, and adjust the spelling to fit the rules of your language.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If your language uses a different script from the language you are translating from, you can simply substitute each letter shape with the corresponding letter shape of the script of your language.

A man's name in Hebrew letters — זְפַנְיָהּ  
 "Zephaniah" — The same name in Roman letters

(2) You can spell the word as the Other Language spells it, and pronounce it the way your language normally pronounces those letters.

Zephaniah — This is a man's name.  
 "Zephaniah" — The name as it is spelled in English, but you can pronounce it according to the rules of your language.

(3) You can pronounce the word similarly to the way the Other Language does, and adjust the spelling to fit the rules of your language.

Zephaniah — If your language does not have the "z," you could use "s." If your writing system does not use "ph" you could use "f." Depending on how you pronounce the "i" you could spell it with "i" or "ai" or "ay."  
 "Sefania"  
 "Sefanaia"  
 "Sefanaya"

"

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 16:22](#); [1 Corinthians 16:24](#)

# 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.

This page answers the question: *What are direct and indirect quotations?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

*Pronouns* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Verbs* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Quotations and Quote Margins* ([UTA PDF](#))

## 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!**'

## 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](https://ufw.io/figs_quotations).

Next we recommend you learn about:

*Quotes within Quotes* ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:12](#); [1 Corinthians 1:19](#); [1 Corinthians 3:4](#); [1 Corinthians 3:19](#); [1 Corinthians 3:20](#); [1 Corinthians 4:6](#); [1 Corinthians 5:13](#); [1 Corinthians 6:16](#); [1 Corinthians 9:9](#); [1 Corinthians 10:7](#); [1 Corinthians 10:26](#); [1 Corinthians 10:28](#); [1 Corinthians 11:24](#); [1 Corinthians 11:25](#); [1 Corinthians 12:3](#); [1 Corinthians 12:15](#); [1 Corinthians 12:16](#); [1 Corinthians 12:21](#); [1 Corinthians 14:21](#); [1 Corinthians 14:25](#); [1 Corinthians 15:27](#); [1 Corinthians 15:32](#); [1 Corinthians 15:33](#); [1 Corinthians 15:35](#); [1 Corinthians 15:45](#); [1 Corinthians 15:54](#); [1 Corinthians 15:55](#)

# 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:

*Parts of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Sentence Structure* ([UTA PDF](#))

When the phrase that modifies a noun is a relative clause (a phrase that starts with a word such as “who” or “which”), 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 the added phrase 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 phrase 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.

You must surely open your hand to your brother, **to your needy and to your poor** in your land. (Deuteronomy 15:11 ULT)

The phrases “to your needy and to your poor” give further information about “your brother.” They do not refer to a separate group of people.

How 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. He was not distinguishing one woman named Sarah from another woman named Sarah who was a different age.

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.

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.

## 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)

**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)

Can Sarah bear a son **even when she is 90 years old**?

You must surely open your hand to your brother, **to your needy and to your poor** in your land. (Deuteronomy 15:11 ULT)

You must surely open your hand to any of **your needy and poor brothers** in your land.

(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.

You must surely open your hand to your brother, **to your needy and to your poor** in your land. (Deuteronomy 15:11 ULT)

You must surely open your hand to your brother **who is needy and poor** in your land.

Next we recommend you learn about:

*Double Negatives* ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:4](#); [1 Corinthians 1:18](#); [1 Corinthians 5:11](#)



## 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:

*Parts of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Sentence Structure* ([UTA PDF](#))

## Description

Negative words are words that have in them the meaning “not.” Examples in English are “no,” “not,” “none,” “no one,” “nothing,” “nowhere,” “never,” “nor,” “neither,” and “without.” Also, some words have prefixes or suffixes that mean “not,” such as the bolded parts of these words: “**un**happy,” “**im**possible,” and “**useless**.” Some other kinds of words also have a negative meaning, such as “lack” or “reject,” or even “fight” or “evil.”

A double negative occurs when a clause has two words that each have a negative meaning.

We did this **not** because we have **no** authority ... (2 Thessalonians 3:9a ULT)

And this was **not** done **without** an oath! (Hebrews 7:20a ULT)

Be sure of this—the wicked person will **not** go **un**punished. (Proverbs 11:21a ULT)

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Double negatives mean very different things in different languages.

- In some languages, such as 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:

χωρίς 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.

χωρὶς ἐμοῦ 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 ἓν ἢ 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:

Verbs ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 8:13](#); [1 Corinthians 9:4](#); [1 Corinthians 9:5](#); [1 Corinthians 9:6](#); [1 Corinthians 9:15](#); [1 Corinthians 11:22](#); [1 Corinthians 12:15](#); [1 Corinthians 12:16](#); [1 Corinthians 13:6](#)

# 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:

*Figures of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

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!"

"

**Referenced in:** 1 Corinthians 3:14; 1 Corinthians 4:12; 1 Corinthians 4:13; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 1 Corinthians 5:2; 1 Corinthians 5:8; 1 Corinthians 6:7; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 1 Corinthians 6:12; 1 Corinthians 7:26; 1 Corinthians 10:23; 1 Corinthians 11:6; 1 Corinthians 11:20; 1 Corinthians 11:22; 1 Corinthians 11:30; 1 Corinthians 13:1; 1 Corinthians 13:4; 1 Corinthians 14:3; 1 Corinthians 14:23; 1 Corinthians 15:54; 1 Corinthians 15:58; 1 Corinthians 16:16

# Ellipsis

## Description

An ellipsis<sup>[^1]</sup> 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:

*Figures of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Sentence Structure* ([UTA PDF](#))

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf and **he makes** Sirion **skip** like a young ox.

Watch carefully, therefore, how you walk—**not as unwise but as wise**. (Ephesians 5:15b ULT)

The information that the reader must understand in the second parts of these sentences can be filled in from the first parts:

Watch carefully, therefore, how you walk—**walk** not as unwise but **walk** as wise,

## Absolute Ellipsis

Then when he had come near, he asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” And so he said, “Lord, **that I might recover my sight**.” (Luke 18:40b-41 ULT)

It seems that the man answered in an incomplete sentence because he wanted to be polite and not directly ask Jesus for healing. He knew that Jesus would understand that the only way he could receive his sight would be for Jesus to heal him. The complete sentence would be:

“Lord, **I want you to heal me so** that I might receive my sight.”

To Titus, a true son in our common faith. Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. (Titus 1:4 ULT)

The writer assumes that the reader will recognize this common form of a blessing or wish, so he does not need to include the full sentence, which would be:

To Titus, a true son in our common faith. **May you receive** grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

## Translation Strategies

If ellipsis would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option:

(1) Add the missing words to the incomplete phrase or sentence.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Add the missing words to the incomplete phrase or sentence.

So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor **sinner in the assembly** of the righteous. (Psalm 1:5 ULT)

So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, and **sinner will not stand in the assembly** of the righteous.

Then when he had come near, he asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” And so he said, “Lord, **that I might recover my sight**.” (Luke 18:40b-41 ULT)

Then when the man was near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, **I want you to heal me** that I might receive my sight.”

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf **and Sirion like a young ox**. (Psalm 29:6 ULT)

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and **he makes** Sirion **skip** like a young ox.

"

**Referenced in:** 1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Corinthians 1:17; 1 Corinthians 1:25; 1 Corinthians 1:31; 1 Corinthians 2:4; 1 Corinthians 2:6; 1 Corinthians 2:9; 1 Corinthians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 3:1; 1 Corinthians 3:2; 1 Corinthians 3:5; 1 Corinthians 3:6; 1 Corinthians 3:7; 1 Corinthians 3:8; 1 Corinthians 4:10; 1 Corinthians 4:15; 1 Corinthians 5:12; 1 Corinthians 6:3; 1 Corinthians 6:6; 1 Corinthians 6:8; 1 Corinthians 6:13; 1 Corinthians 6:16; 1 Corinthians 6:17; 1 Corinthians 7:3; 1 Corinthians 7:4; 1 Corinthians 7:7; 1 Corinthians 7:11; 1 Corinthians 7:17; 1 Corinthians 7:19; 1 Corinthians 7:30; 1 Corinthians 7:31; 1 Corinthians 7:37; 1 Corinthians 9:10; 1 Corinthians 9:12; 1 Corinthians 9:17; 1 Corinthians 9:20; 1 Corinthians 9:21; 1 Corinthians 9:25; 1 Corinthians 10:6; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 Corinthians 10:20; 1 Corinthians 10:24; 1 Corinthians 10:25; 1 Corinthians 10:26; 1 Corinthians 10:27; 1 Corinthians 10:29; 1 Corinthians 11:5; 1 Corinthians 11:9; 1 Corinthians 11:16; 1 Corinthians 11:25; 1 Corinthians 12:4; 1 Corinthians 12:5; 1 Corinthians 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12:8; 1 Corinthians 12:9; 1 Corinthians 12:10; 1 Corinthians 12:17; 1 Corinthians 12:20; 1 Corinthians 12:21; 1 Corinthians 12:24; 1 Corinthians 12:29; 1 Corinthians 13:4; 1 Corinthians 13:8; 1 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Corinthians 13:13; 1 Corinthians 14:5; 1 Corinthians 14:9; 1 Corinthians 14:11; 1 Corinthians 14:12; 1 Corinthians 14:13; 1 Corinthians 14:18; 1 Corinthians 14:22; 1 Corinthians 14:27; 1 Corinthians 15:10; 1 Corinthians 15:11; 1 Corinthians 15:21; 1 Corinthians 15:23; 1 Corinthians 15:26; 1 Corinthians 15:37; 1 Corinthians 15:38; 1 Corinthians 15:39; 1 Corinthians 15:40; 1 Corinthians 15:45; 1 Corinthians 15:48; 1 Corinthians 16:12; 1 Corinthians 16:18; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 1 Corinthians 16:24



# 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.

This page answers the question: *What is a euphemism?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

*Figures of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

... 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.

## 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."

"

**Referenced in:** [Introduction to 1 Corinthians](#); [1 Corinthians 5 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 5:1](#); [1 Corinthians 5:3](#); [1 Corinthians 6:16](#); [1 Corinthians 7 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 7:1](#); [1 Corinthians 7:3](#); [1 Corinthians 7:5](#); [1 Corinthians 10:5](#); [1 Corinthians 10:7](#); [1 Corinthians 10:8](#); [1 Corinthians 11:30](#); [1 Corinthians 12:23](#); [1 Corinthians 15 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 15:6](#); [1 Corinthians 15:18](#); [1 Corinthians 15:20](#); [1 Corinthians 15:51](#)

# Exclamations

## Description

Exclamations are words or sentences that show strong feeling such as surprise, joy, fear, or anger. In the ULT and UST, they usually have an exclamation mark (!) at the end. The mark shows that it is an exclamation. The situation and the meaning of what the people said helps us understand what feelings they were expressing. In the example below from Matthew 8, the speakers were terribly afraid. In the example from Matthew 9, the speakers were amazed, because something happened that they had never seen before.

This page answers the question: *What are ways of translating exclamations?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

*Sentence Types* ([UTA PDF](#))

Save us, Lord; we are about to die! (Matthew 8:25b ULT)

When the demon had been driven out, the mute man spoke. The crowds were astonished and said, "This has never been seen before in Israel!" (Matthew 9:33 ULT)

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Languages have different ways of showing that a sentence communicates strong emotion.

## Examples From the Bible

Some exclamations have a word that shows feeling. The sentences below have "Oh" and "Ah." The word "oh" here shows the speaker's amazement.

**Oh**, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! (Romans 11:33 ULT)

The word "Alas" below shows that Gideon was very frightened.

When Gideon saw that he was the angel of Yahweh, Gideon lamented, "**Alas**, O my Lord Yahweh, for because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!" (Judges 6:22 ULT)

Some exclamations start with a question word such as "how" or "why," even though they are not questions. The sentence below shows that the speaker is amazed at how unsearchable God's judgments are.

**How** unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways beyond discovering! (Romans 11:33b ULT)

Some exclamations in the Bible do not have a main verb. The exclamation below shows that the speaker is disgusted with the person he is speaking to.

You worthless person! (Matthew 5:22b ULT)

## Translation Strategies

- (1) If an exclamation in your language needs a verb, add one. Often a good verb is "is" or "are."
- (2) Use an exclamation word from your language that shows the strong feeling.
- (3) Translate the exclamation word with a sentence that shows the feeling.
- (4) Use a word that emphasizes the part of the sentence that brings about the strong feeling.
- (5) If the strong feeling is not clear in the target language, then tell how the person felt.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If an exclamation in your language needs a verb, add one. Often a good verb is “is” or “are.”

You worthless person! (Matthew 5:22b ULT)

“You **are** such a worthless person!”

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! (Romans 11:33b ULT)

“Oh, the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God **are** so deep!”

(2) Use an exclamation word from your language that shows the strong feeling. In the first suggested translation below, the word “wow” shows that they were astonished. In the second suggested translation, the expression “Oh no” shows that something terrible or frightening has happened.

They were extremely astonished, saying, “He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.” (Mark 7:37 ULT)

“They were extremely astonished, saying, ‘**Wow!** He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.’”

Alas, oh my Lord Yahweh! For because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face! (Judges 6:22b ULT)

“**Oh no**, Lord Yahweh! I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”

(3) Translate the exclamation word with a sentence that shows the feeling.

“**Alas**, O my Lord Yahweh, for because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!” (Judges 6:22 ULT)

“Lord Yahweh, **what will happen to me?** For I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!” “**Help**, Lord Yahweh! For I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”

(4) Use a word that emphasizes the part of the sentence that brings about the strong feeling.

How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways beyond discovering! (Romans 11:33b ULT)

“His judgments are **so** unsearchable and his ways are **far** beyond discovering!”

(5) If the strong feeling is not clear in the target language, then tell how the person felt.

When Gideon saw that he was the angel of Yahweh, Gideon lamented, “**Alas**, O my Lord Yahweh, for because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!” (Judges 6:22 ULT)

Gideon understood that this was the angel of Yahweh. **He was terrified** and said, “**Alas**, Lord Yahweh! I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”

”

Referenced in: [1 Corinthians 15:36](#); [1 Corinthians 15:51](#)

# Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

## Description

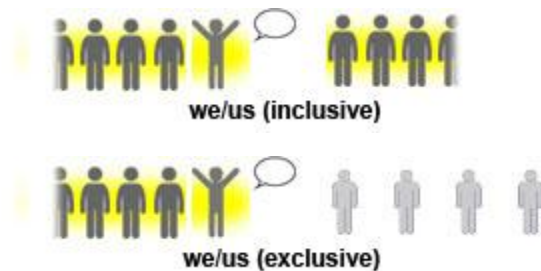
Some languages have more than one form of "we": an inclusive form that means "I and you" and an exclusive form that means "I and someone else but not you." The exclusive form excludes the person being spoken to. The inclusive form includes the person being spoken to and possibly others. This is also 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:

[Pronouns \(UTA PDF\)](#)

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* ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:23](#); [1 Corinthians 2 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 2:6](#); [1 Corinthians 2:7](#); [1 Corinthians 2:13](#); [1 Corinthians 3:9](#); [1 Corinthians 4:1](#); [1 Corinthians 4:6](#); [1 Corinthians 4:8](#); [1 Corinthians 4:9](#); [1 Corinthians 4:10](#); [1 Corinthians 4:11](#); [1 Corinthians 4:12](#); [1 Corinthians 4:13](#); [1 Corinthians 9:4](#); [1 Corinthians 9:5](#); [1 Corinthians 9:10](#); [1 Corinthians 9:11](#); [1 Corinthians 9:12](#); [1 Corinthians 11:16](#); [1 Corinthians 15:11](#); [1 Corinthians 15:14](#); [1 Corinthians 15:15](#); [1 Corinthians 15:30](#); [1 Corinthians 15:51](#); [1 Corinthians 15:52](#)

## First, Second or Third Person

Normally a speaker refers to himself as “I” and the person he is speaking to as “you.” Sometimes in the Bible a speaker refers to himself or to the person he is speaking to with terms other than “I” or “you.”

### Description

- First person — This is how a speaker normally refers to himself. English uses the pronouns “I” and “we.” (Also: me, my, mine; us, our, ours)
- Second person — This is how a speaker normally refers to the person or people he is speaking to. English uses the pronoun “you.” (Also: your, yours)
- Third person — This is how a speaker refers to someone else. English uses the pronouns “he,” “she,” “it,” and “they.” (Also: him, his, her, hers, its; them, their, theirs) Noun phrases like “the man” or “the woman” are also third person.

This page answers the question: *What are first, second, and third person, and how do I translate when a third person form does not refer to the third person?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

*Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information*

*Explicit* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Pronouns* ([UTA PDF](#))

### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Sometimes in the Bible a speaker uses the third person to refer to himself or to the people he is speaking to. Readers might think that the speaker was referring to someone else. They might not understand that he meant “I” or “you.”

### Examples From the Bible

Sometimes people used the third person instead of “I” or “me” to refer to themselves.

But David said to Saul, “**Your servant** used to keep **his** father’s sheep.” (1 Samuel 17:34 ULT)

David referred to himself in the third person as “your servant” and used “his.” He was calling himself Saul’s servant in order to show his humility before Saul.

Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said,  
“... Do you have an arm like **God’s**? Can you thunder with a voice like **his**?” (Job 40:6, 9 ULT)

God referred to himself in the third person with the words “God’s” and “his.” He did this to emphasize that he is God, and he is powerful.

Sometimes people use the third person instead of “you” or “your” to refer to the person or people they are speaking to.

Abraham answered and said, “Look, I have undertaken to speak to my Lord, even though I am only dust and ashes!” (Genesis 18:27 ULT)

Abraham was speaking to the Lord, and referred to the Lord as “My Lord” rather than as “you.” He did this to show his humility before God.

So also my heavenly Father will do to you, if **each of you** does not forgive **his** brother from your heart. (Matthew 18:35 ULT)

After saying “each of you,” Jesus used the third person “his” instead of “your.”

## Translation Strategies

If using the third person to mean “I” or “you” would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

- (1) Use the third person phrase along with the pronoun “I” or “you.”
- (2) Simply use the first person (“I”) or second person (“you”) instead of the third person.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use the third person phrase along with the pronoun “I” or “you.”

But David said to Saul, “**Your servant** used to keep **his** father’s sheep.” (1 Samuel 17:34)

But David said to Saul, “**I, your servant**, used to keep **my** father’s sheep.”

- (2) Simply use the first person (“I”) or second person (“you”) instead of the third person.

Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said, “... Do you have an arm like **God’s**? Can you thunder with a voice like **his**?” (Job 40:6, 9 ULT)

Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said, “... Do you have an arm like **mine**? Can you thunder with a voice like **mine**?”

So also my heavenly Father will do to you if **each of you** does not forgive **his** brother from your heart. (Matthew 18:35 ULT)

So also my heavenly Father will do to you if **each of you** does not forgive **your** brother from your heart.

Next we recommend you learn about:

*Forms of You (UTA PDF)*

**Referenced in:** 1 Corinthians 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Corinthians 1:13; 1 Corinthians 1:24; 1 Corinthians 3:5; 1 Corinthians 5:12; 1 Corinthians 6:15; 1 Corinthians 7:14; 1 Corinthians 8:13; 1 Corinthians 10:29; 1 Corinthians 10:30; 1 Corinthians 13:11; 1 Corinthians 14:6; 1 Corinthians 14:11; 1 Corinthians 14:14; 1 Corinthians 14:15; 1 Corinthians 14:23; 1 Corinthians 14:24; 1 Corinthians 16:21



## Forms of You

### Singular, Dual, and Plural

Some languages have more than one word for “you” based on how many people the word “you” refers to. The **singular** form refers to one person, and the **plural** form refers to more than one person. Some languages also have a **dual** form which refers to two people, and some languages have other forms that refer to three or four people.

This page answers the question: *What are the different forms of you?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

*Forms of ‘You’ — Singular* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Forms of ‘You’ — Dual/Plural* ([UTA PDF](#))

You may also want to watch the video at [https://ufw.io/figs\\_younum](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. For help with translating these, we suggest you read:

- [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 or she 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](https://ufw.io/figs_youform).

For help with translating these, we suggest you read:

- [Forms of “You” — Formal or Informal](#)

### Masculine and Feminine

Some languages have a **masculine** form and a **feminine** form of the word for “you.” People use the **masculine** form when speaking to a man or boy and the **feminine** form when speaking to a woman or girl.

English does not make any of the above distinctions, so they are absent in the ULT. Please be aware of this and use the appropriate forms of “you” if your language does make any of these distinctions.

”

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 15:55](#)

# 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:

*Parts of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Forms of You* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Pronouns* ([UTA PDF](#))

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 and he used the singular form. So languages that have singular and plural forms of "you" need the singular form here, as well as for the verbs "sell," "distribute," "come," and "follow."

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 angel used singular forms here and the context makes it clear that he 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," "put on," and "follow" need the form that indicates a singular subject.

All the ones {who are} with me greet **you**. **Greet** the ones loving us in faith. Grace {be} with all of **you**. (Titus 3:15 ULT)

Paul wrote this letter to one person, Titus, so most of the time the word “you” in this letter is singular and refers only to Titus. In this verse, the first “you” is singular, so the greeting is for Titus, as well as the instruction to greet the others there. The second “you,” however, is plural, so the blessing is for Titus and for all of the believers there in Crete.

“Having gone, **search** carefully for the young child, and after **you** have found him, **report** to me so that I also, having come, might worship him.” (Matthew 2:8 ULT)

Since Herod is speaking to all of the learned men, the word “you” and the commands “search” and “report” are plural.

## 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](https://ufw.io/figs_younum).

Next we recommend you learn about:

*Forms of 'You' — Dual/Plural* ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 4:7](#); [1 Corinthians 7:16](#); [1 Corinthians 7:21](#); [1 Corinthians 7:27](#); [1 Corinthians 7:28](#); [1 Corinthians 8:11](#); [1 Corinthians 9:9](#); [1 Corinthians 14:16](#); [1 Corinthians 14:17](#); [1 Corinthians 15:36](#); [1 Corinthians 15:37](#)

## 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:

*Parts of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

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* ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** 1 Corinthians 1:20; 1 Corinthians 2:11; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 1 Corinthians 2:15; 1 Corinthians 3:7; 1 Corinthians 3:8; 1 Corinthians 4:1; 1 Corinthians 6:16; 1 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Corinthians 7:3; 1 Corinthians 7:4; 1 Corinthians 7:10; 1 Corinthians 7:11; 1 Corinthians 7:14; 1 Corinthians 7:15; 1 Corinthians 7:16; 1 Corinthians 7:32; 1 Corinthians 7:33; 1 Corinthians 7:34; 1 Corinthians 7:38; 1 Corinthians 8:11; 1 Corinthians 8:13; 1 Corinthians 9:10; 1 Corinthians 10:24; 1 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Corinthians 11:7; 1 Corinthians 11:10; 1 Corinthians 11:11; 1 Corinthians 11:12; 1 Corinthians 12:12; 1 Corinthians 12:14; 1 Corinthians 12:15; 1 Corinthians 12:16; 1 Corinthians 12:17; 1 Corinthians 12:21; 1 Corinthians 12:24; 1 Corinthians 14:2; 1 Corinthians 14:3; 1 Corinthians 14:4; 1 Corinthians 14:5; 1 Corinthians 14:13; 1 Corinthians 14:16; 1 Corinthians 14:17

## 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?

”

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 2:1](#); [1 Corinthians 4:5](#); [1 Corinthians 4:18](#); [1 Corinthians 4:19](#); [1 Corinthians 4:21](#); [1 Corinthians 10:1](#); [1 Corinthians 11:17](#); [1 Corinthians 11:34](#); [1 Corinthians 14:6](#); [1 Corinthians 14:23](#); [1 Corinthians 14:24](#); [1 Corinthians 14:26](#); [1 Corinthians 14:36](#); [1 Corinthians 16 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 16:2](#); [1 Corinthians 16:4](#); [1 Corinthians 16:5](#); [1 Corinthians 16:6](#); [1 Corinthians 16:10](#); [1 Corinthians 16:11](#); [1 Corinthians 16:12](#); [1 Corinthians 16:17](#)

# Hendiadys

## Description

In a hendiadys, a speaker uses two words that mean different things and that are connected with “and.” These two words work together to express a single idea. 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:

*Figures of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Parts of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

... 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:

*Doublet* ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 2:4](#); [1 Corinthians 3:3](#); [1 Corinthians 15:50](#)

## 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:

*Translate Unknowns* ([UTA PDF](#))

### 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** <sup>1</sup>

The footnote would look like:

<sup>[1]</sup> 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:

<sup>[1]</sup> 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**<sup>1</sup> and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue

The footnote would look like:

<sup>[1]</sup> This is the same man who was called Saul before Acts 13.

Next we recommend you learn about:

Copy or Borrow Words ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** [Introduction to 1 Corinthians](#); [1 Corinthians 1:1](#); [1 Corinthians 1:11](#); [1 Corinthians 1:14](#); [1 Corinthians 1:16](#); [1 Corinthians 12:3](#); [1 Corinthians 16:15](#); [1 Corinthians 16:17](#)

# 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:

*Figures of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

## 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.

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**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:2](#); [1 Corinthians 1:4](#); [1 Corinthians 1:12](#); [1 Corinthians 1:22](#); [1 Corinthians 1:23](#); [1 Corinthians 1:28](#); [1 Corinthians 2:2](#); [1 Corinthians 2:15](#); [1 Corinthians 3:7](#); [1 Corinthians 4:15](#); [1 Corinthians 4:17](#); [1 Corinthians 7:19](#); [1 Corinthians 9 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 9:9](#); [1 Corinthians 9:22](#); [1 Corinthians 10:21](#); [1 Corinthians 11:22](#); [1 Corinthians 13:2](#); [1 Corinthians 14:19](#); [1 Corinthians 15:31](#); [1 Corinthians 15:32](#)

## 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:

Writing Styles ([UTA PDF](#))

## 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](https://ufw.io/figs_hypo).

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**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 12:15](#); [1 Corinthians 12:16](#); [1 Corinthians 12:17](#); [1 Corinthians 12:19](#); [1 Corinthians 12:21](#); [1 Corinthians 13 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 13:1](#); [1 Corinthians 13:2](#); [1 Corinthians 13:3](#); [1 Corinthians 14 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 14:6](#); [1 Corinthians 14:11](#); [1 Corinthians 14:23](#); [1 Corinthians 14:24](#)

## 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:

*Figures of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

## 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**

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**Referenced in:** 1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Corinthians 1:8; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 1 Corinthians 1:12; 1 Corinthians 1:26; 1 Corinthians 1:28; 1 Corinthians 1:29; 1 Corinthians 1:31; 1 Corinthians 2:5; 1 Corinthians 2:7; 1 Corinthians 2:9; 1 Corinthians 2:11; 1 Corinthians 3:3; 1 Corinthians 3:19; 1 Corinthians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 4:3; 1 Corinthians 4:4; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 1 Corinthians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 4:12; 1 Corinthians 4:13; 1 Corinthians 5:2; 1 Corinthians 5:3; 1 Corinthians 5:4; 1 Corinthians 5:12; 1 Corinthians 5:13; 1 Corinthians 6:1; 1 Corinthians 6:2; 1 Corinthians 6:5; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 1 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Corinthians 6:15; 1 Corinthians 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:5; 1 Corinthians 7:10; 1 Corinthians 7:12; 1 Corinthians 7:13; 1 Corinthians 7:15; 1 Corinthians 7:27; 1 Corinthians 7:28; 1 Corinthians 7:35; 1 Corinthians 7:37; 1 Corinthians 8:7; 1 Corinthians 9:8; 1 Corinthians 9:12; 1 Corinthians 9:14; 1 Corinthians 9:16; 1 Corinthians 9:18; 1 Corinthians 9:22; 1 Corinthians 9:26; 1 Corinthians 10:2; 1 Corinthians 10:6; 1 Corinthians 10:11; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 Corinthians 10:18; 1 Corinthians 10:27; 1 Corinthians 11:2; 1 Corinthians 11:5; 1 Corinthians 11:18; 1 Corinthians 11:21; 1 Corinthians 11:27; 1 Corinthians 11:28; 1 Corinthians 12:11; 1 Corinthians 12:12; 1 Corinthians 12:13; 1 Corinthians 12:15; 1 Corinthians 12:16; 1 Corinthians 12:21; 1 Corinthians 12:25; 1 Corinthians 13:5; 1 Corinthians 13:7; 1 Corinthians 13:9; 1 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Corinthians 14:7; 1 Corinthians 14:8; 1

Corinthians 14:9; 1 Corinthians 14:12; 1 Corinthians 14:25; 1 Corinthians 14:27; 1 Corinthians 14:28; 1 Corinthians 14:31; 1 Corinthians 14:34; 1 Corinthians 15:4; 1 Corinthians 15:6; 1 Corinthians 15:10; 1 Corinthians 15:12; 1 Corinthians 15:14; 1 Corinthians 15:15; 1 Corinthians 15:17; 1 Corinthians 15:23; 1 Corinthians 15:25; 1 Corinthians 15:27; 1 Corinthians 15:28; 1 Corinthians 15:30; 1 Corinthians 15:32; 1 Corinthians 15:34; 1 Corinthians 15:49; 1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Corinthians 15:54; 1 Corinthians 15:57; 1 Corinthians 15:58; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 1 Corinthians 16:6; 1 Corinthians 16:7; 1 Corinthians 16:10; 1 Corinthians 16:13; 1 Corinthians 16:14; 1 Corinthians 16:17; 1 Corinthians 16:18; 1 Corinthians 16:19



## 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:

*Sentence Types* ([UTA PDF](#))

### 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)

## Imperatives that function as good results

An imperative sentence can also describe a desirable result. In Proverbs 3:3-4, several imperatives give instructions, then the final imperative describes the good outcome of following those instructions.

Do not let covenant faithfulness and trustworthiness leave you; tie them on your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart, and **find favor** and good insight in the eyes of God and man!  
(Proverbs 3:3-4 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.”

Do not let covenant faithfulness and trustworthiness leave you; tie them on your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart, **and find favor** and good insight in the eyes of God and man! (Proverbs 3:3-4 ULT)

Do not let covenant faithfulness and trustworthiness leave you; tie them on your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart, **then you will find favor** and good insight in the eyes of God and man!

(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.”

”

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 12:31](#); [1 Corinthians 15:49](#)

## 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:

*Sentence Structure* ([UTA PDF](#))

### 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:

[Word Order \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding \(UTA PDF\)](#)

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:10](#); [1 Corinthians 1:17](#); [1 Corinthians 1:24](#); [1 Corinthians 1:26](#); [1 Corinthians 1:31](#); [1 Corinthians 2:9](#); [1 Corinthians 2:12](#); [1 Corinthians 2:13](#); [1 Corinthians 3:1](#); [1 Corinthians 3:9](#); [1 Corinthians 3:10](#); [1](#)

Corinthians 3:22; 1 Corinthians 4:6; 1 Corinthians 4:9; 1 Corinthians 4:10; 1 Corinthians 4:14; 1 Corinthians 4:19; 1 Corinthians 5:4; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Corinthians 6:7; 1 Corinthians 7:6; 1 Corinthians 7:11; 1 Corinthians 7:16; 1 Corinthians 7:17; 1 Corinthians 7:20; 1 Corinthians 7:24; 1 Corinthians 7:26; 1 Corinthians 7:37; 1 Corinthians 9:16; 1 Corinthians 9:17; 1 Corinthians 9:20; 1 Corinthians 9:21; 1 Corinthians 9:26; 1 Corinthians 10:17; 1 Corinthians 10:20; 1 Corinthians 10:26; 1 Corinthians 11:26; 1 Corinthians 11:28; 1 Corinthians 12:18; 1 Corinthians 12:23; 1 Corinthians 13:13; 1 Corinthians 14:5; 1 Corinthians 14:6; 1 Corinthians 14:7; 1 Corinthians 14:19; 1 Corinthians 14:20; 1 Corinthians 14:21; 1 Corinthians 14:22; 1 Corinthians 14:33; 1 Corinthians 15:2; 1 Corinthians 15:6; 1 Corinthians 15:9; 1 Corinthians 15:10; 1 Corinthians 15:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24; 1 Corinthians 15:32; 1 Corinthians 15:46; 1 Corinthians 16:1; 1 Corinthians 16:3; 1 Corinthians 16:13; 1 Corinthians 16:15

# Irony

## Description

Irony is a figure of speech in which the sense that the speaker intends to communicate is actually the opposite of the literal meaning of the words. Sometimes a person does this by using someone else's words, but in a way that communicates that he does not agree with them. People do this to emphasize how different something is from what it should be, or how someone else's belief about something is wrong or foolish. It is often humorous.

This page answers the question: *What is irony and how can I translate it?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

*Figures of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

Then Jesus answered and said to them, "People who are well do not have need of a physician, but those who have sickness. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."  
(Luke 5:31-32 ULT)

When Jesus spoke of "the righteous," he was not referring to people who were truly righteous, but to people who wrongly believed that they were righteous. By using irony, Jesus communicated that they were wrong to think that they were better than others and did not need to repent.

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

If someone does not realize that a speaker is using irony, he will think that the speaker actually believes what he is saying. He will understand the passage to mean the opposite of what it was intended to mean.

## Examples From the Bible

**How well you reject the commandment of God** so that you may keep your tradition! (Mark 7:9b ULT)

Here Jesus praises the Pharisees for doing something that is obviously wrong. Through irony, he communicates the opposite of praise: He communicates that the Pharisees, who take great pride in keeping the commandments, are so far from God that they do not even recognize that their traditions are breaking God's commandments. The use of irony makes the Pharisee's sin more obvious and startling.

"Present your case," says Yahweh; "present your best arguments for your idols," says the King of Jacob. **"Let them bring us their own arguments; have them come forward and declare to us what will happen, so we may know these things well. Have them tell us of earlier predictive declarations, so we can reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled."** (Isaiah 41:21-22 ULT)

People worshiped idols as if their idols had knowledge or power, and Yahweh was angry at them for doing that. So he used irony and challenged their idols to tell what would happen in the future. He knew that the idols could not do this, but by speaking as if they could, he mocked the idols, making their inability more obvious, and rebuked the people for worshiping them.

Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work? Can you find the way back to their houses for them? **You know, for you were born then, and the number of your days is many!** (Job 38:20-21 ULT)

Job thought that he was wise. Yahweh used irony to show Job that he was not so wise. The two phrases in bold above are irony. They emphasize the opposite of what they say, because they are so obviously false. They emphasize that Job could not possibly answer God's questions about the creation of light because Job was not born until many, many years later.

Already you are satisfied! Already you have become rich! **You began to reign** apart from us, and I wish you really did reign, so that we also might reign with you. (1 Corinthians 4:8 ULT)

The Corinthians considered themselves to be very wise, self-sufficient, and not in need of any instruction from the Apostle Paul. Paul used irony, speaking as if he agreed with them, to show how proudly they were acting and how far from being wise they really were.

## Translation Strategies

If the irony would be understood correctly in your language, translate it as it is stated. If not, here are some other strategies.

- (1) Translate the irony in a way that shows that the speaker is saying what someone else believes.
- (2) Translate the actual, intended meaning of the statement of irony. (Remember: The true meaning of the irony is **not** found in the literal words of the speaker, but instead the true meaning is found in the opposite of the literal meaning of the speaker's words.)

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Translate it in a way that shows that the speaker is saying what someone else believes.

**How well you reject the commandment of God** so that you may keep your tradition! (Mark 7:9a ULT)

**You think that you are doing well when you reject God's commandment** so you may keep your tradition!

or:

**You act like it is good to reject God's commandment** so you may keep your tradition!

I did not come to call **the righteous**, but sinners to repentance. (Luke 5:32 ULT)

I did not come to call **people who think that they are righteous** to repentance, but to call people who know that they are sinners to repentance.

- (2) Translate the actual, intended meaning of the statement of irony.

**How well you reject the commandment of God** so that you may keep your tradition! (Mark 7:9a ULT)

**You are doing a terrible thing when you reject the commandment of God** so you may keep your tradition!

"Present your case," says Yahweh; "present your best arguments for your idols," says the King of Jacob. **"Let them bring us their own arguments; have them come forward and declare to us what will happen, so we may know these things well. Have them tell us of earlier predictive declarations, so we can reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled."** (Isaiah 41:21-22 ULT)

'Present your case,' says Yahweh; 'present your best arguments for your idols,' says the King of Jacob. **Can your idols bring us their own arguments or come forward to declare to us what will happen** so we may know these things well? **No!** We cannot hear them because **they cannot speak** to tell us their earlier predictive declarations, so we cannot reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled.



Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work? Can you find the way back to their houses for them? **You know, for you were born then, and the number of your days is many!** (Job 38:20-21 ULT)

Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work? Can you find the way back to their houses for them? **You act like you know how light and darkness were created, as if you were there; as if you are as old as creation, but you are not!**

Next we recommend you learn about:

*Litotes* ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:21](#); [1 Corinthians 1:25](#); [1 Corinthians 3:18](#); [1 Corinthians 4 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 4:8](#); [1 Corinthians 4:10](#); [1 Corinthians 8:5](#); [1 Corinthians 11:19](#); [1 Corinthians 12:31](#)

# Kinship

## Description

This page answers the question: *What are kinship terms and how can I translate them?*

Kinship terms refer to those words used to describe people related to one another in familial relationships. These terms vary widely in their specificity from language to language. They range from the (Western) nuclear or immediate family (father-son, husband-wife) out to broad clan relationships in other cultures.

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Depending on the language translators may need to use specific terms to designate the accurate kinship relationship. In some languages a different term may be used based on siblings' birth order. In others, the side of the family (father's or mother's), age, marital status, etc. may determine the term used. Different terms may be used based on the gender of the speaker and/or addressee. Translators may need to make sure they know the exact relationship between two related people in the Bible to find the correct term. Sometimes these terms are difficult even for native speakers to remember and translators may need to seek community help in finding the correct term. Another complicating issue is that the Bible may not give enough information about the relationship for translators to determine the correct term in the language being translated into. In this case, translators will have to use a more general term or simply pick a satisfactory term based on the limited information available.

Sometimes terms that seem like kinship terms are used for people who are not necessarily related. For instance, an older person may refer to a younger man or woman as "my son" or "my daughter."

## Examples from the Bible

Then Yahweh said to Cain, "Where is Abel **your brother**?" He said, "I do not know. Am I **my brother's** keeper?" (Genesis 4:9 ULT)

Abel was Cain's younger brother.

Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field to his flock and said to them, "I see **your father's** attitude toward me has changed, but the God of my father has been with me." (Genesis 31:4-5 ULT)

Jacob is referring here to his father-in-law. In some languages there may be a specific term for a man's father-in-law, however, in this case it is better to retain the form **your father** as Jacob may be using it to distance himself from Laban.

And Moses was shepherding the flock of Jethro **his father-in-law**, the priest of Midian. (Exodus 3:1a ULT)

Unlike the previous instance, if your language has a term for a man's father-in-law this is a good place to use it.

And **his sister** stationed herself at a distance to know what would be done to him. (Exodus 2:4 ULT)

From context we know that this was Miriam, Moses's older sister. In some languages this may require a specific term. In others, the term for older sister may be only used when the younger sibling is addressing and/or referring to his or her sister.

Then she and **her daughters-in-law** arose to return from the fields of Moab (Ruth 1:6a ULT)

Ruth & Orpah are Naomi's daughters-in-law.

Then she said, "Look, your sister-in-law has turned back to her people and to her gods." (Ruth 1:15 ULT)

Orpah had been the wife of Ruth's husband's brother. This may be a different term in your language than if she had been Ruth's husband's sister.

Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Will you not listen to me, **my daughter**?" (Ruth 2:8a ULT)

Boaz is not Ruth's father; he is simply using the term to address a younger woman.

And behold, **your relative** Elizabeth—she also has conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren. (Luke 1:36 ULT)

While the KJV translated this as **cousin**, the term simply means a related woman.

## Translation Strategies

- (1) Find out the exact relationship specified and translate using the term your language uses.
- (2) If the text does not specify the relationship as clearly as your language would, either:
  - (a) settle on a more general term.
  - (b) use a specific term if required by your language, choosing the one that is most likely to be correct.

## Translation Strategies Applied

This is not an issue in English, so the following illustrations draw on other languages.

In Korean, there are several terms for brother and sister; the use of them depends on the speaker's (or referent's) sex and birth order. Examples are from the Korean Living Bible, found on [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com)

Genesis 30:1 Rachel is jealous of her "eonni," which is the term a woman uses for her older sister.

Genesis 34:31 Simeon and Levi refer to Dinah as "nui," a general term for sister.

Genesis 37:16 Joseph refers to his brothers as "hyeong," which is the term a man uses for his older brother(s).

Genesis 45:12 Joseph refers to Benjamin as "dongsaeng," which roughly means sibling, usually younger.

In Russian, in-law terms are complex. For instance, "nevěstka" is the term for a brother's (or brother-in-law's) wife; a woman uses the same term for her daughter-in-law but her husband would call the same daughter-in-law "snoxá." Examples from the Russian Synodal Version.

Genesis 38:25 Tamar sends a message to her father-in-law, Judah. The term used is "svekor." This is used for a woman's husband's father.

Exodus 3:1 Moses is watching his father-in-law's herd. The term used is "test'." This is used for a man's wife's father.

"

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 5:1](#); [1 Corinthians 9:5](#); [1 Corinthians 10:1](#)

# 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:

*Figures of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

## 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."

"

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:7](#); [1 Corinthians 1:26](#); [1 Corinthians 9:26](#); [1 Corinthians 10:1](#); [1 Corinthians 11:11](#); [1 Corinthians 12:1](#); [1 Corinthians 12:25](#); [1 Corinthians 13:8](#); [1 Corinthians 14:10](#); [1 Corinthians 15:10](#)

# Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

## Description

Some languages have ways of saying things that are natural for them but sound strange when translated into Other Languages. One of the reasons for this is that some languages say things explicitly that some Other Languages would leave as implicit information.

This page answers the question: *What can I do if some of the explicit information seems confusing, unnatural, or unnecessary in our language?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

*Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information* ([UTA PDF](#))

## Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

If you translate all of the explicit information from the source language into the explicit information in the target language, it could sound foreign, unnatural, or perhaps even unintelligent if the target language would not make that information explicit. Instead, it is best to leave that kind of information implicit in the target language.

## Examples from the Bible

**And** Abimelech came to the tower and fought against it and drew near to the door of the tower **to burn it with fire**. (Judges 9:52 ESV)

In Biblical Hebrew, it is normal to start most sentences with a conjunction such as “and” to show the connection between sentences. In English, it is not natural to do so, it is quite tiresome for the English reader, and it gives the impression that the author is uneducated. In English, it is best to leave the idea of connection between sentences implicit in most cases and not translate the conjunction explicitly.

In Biblical Hebrew, it is normal to say that something was burned with fire. In English, the idea of fire is included in the action of burning, and so it is unnatural to state both ideas explicitly. It is enough to say that something was burned and leave the idea of fire implicit.

But the centurion **answered and said**, “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof” (Matthew 8:8a ULT)

In the biblical languages, it was normal to introduce direct speech with two verbs of speaking. One verb indicated the action, and the other introduced the words of the speaker. English speakers do not do this, so it is very unnatural and confusing to use two verbs. For the English speaker, the idea of speaking is included in the idea of answering. Using two verbs in English implies two separate speeches, rather than just one. So in English, it is better to use only one verb of speaking.

## Translation Strategies

- (1) If the explicit information of the source language sounds natural in the target language, then translate it as explicit information.
- (2) If the explicit information does not sound natural in the target language or seems unnecessary or confusing, leave the explicit information implicit. Only do this if the reader can understand this information from the context. You can test this by asking the reader a question about the passage.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the explicit information of the source language sounds natural in the target language, then translate it as explicit information.

- There would be no change to the text using this strategy, so no examples are given here.

(2) If the explicit information does not sound natural in the target language or seems unnecessary or confusing, make the explicit information implicit. Only do this if the reader can understand this information from the context. You can test this by asking the reader a question about the passage.

**And** Abimelech came to the tower and fought against it and drew near to the door of the tower **to burn it with fire**. (Judges 9:52 ESV)

Abimelech came to the tower and fought against it, and he approached the door of the tower **to burn it**. (Or) ... **to set it on fire**.

In English, it is clear that the action of this verse follows the action of the previous verse without the use of the connector “and” at the beginning, so it was omitted. Also, the words “with fire” were left out, because this information is communicated implicitly by the word “burn.” An alternative translation for “to burn it” is “to set it on fire.” It is not natural in English to use both “burn” and “fire,” so the English translator should choose only one of them. You can test if the readers understood the implicit information by asking, “How would the door burn?” If they knew it was by fire, then they have understood the implicit information. Or, if you chose the second option, you could ask, “What happens to a door that is set on fire?” If the readers answer, “It burns,” then they have understood the implicit information.

But the centurion **answered and said**, “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof” (Matthew 8:8a ULT)

The centurion **answered**, “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof”

In English, the information that the centurion responded by speaking is included in the verb “answered,” so the verb “said” can be left implicit. You can test if the readers understood the implicit information by asking, “How did the centurion answer?” If they knew it was by speaking, then they have understood the implicit information.

**He opened his mouth** and taught them, saying, (Matthew 5:2 ULT)

**He began to** teach them, saying, (Or) He taught them, saying,

In English, it would be very strange to include the information that Jesus opened his mouth when he spoke. That information is included in the verbs “taught” and “saying,” so that phrase can be omitted and that information left implicit. However, “he opened his mouth” is an idiom that indicates the beginning of a speech, so that information may be included, or it may also be left implicit.

Next we recommend you learn about:

*When to Keep Information Implicit* ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:12](#); [1 Corinthians 2:1](#); [1 Corinthians 2:7](#); [1 Corinthians 3:20](#); [1 Corinthians 4:1](#); [1 Corinthians 4:5](#)

# 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:

*Figures of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

**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**.

"

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 7:34](#); [1 Corinthians 8:5](#)

# 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:

*Figures of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Simile* ([UTA PDF](#))

## 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](#).

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**Referenced in:** Introduction to 1 Corinthians; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Corinthians 1:4; 1 Corinthians 1:5; 1 Corinthians 1:6; 1 Corinthians 1:13; 1 Corinthians 1:17; 1 Corinthians 1:23; 1 Corinthians 1:29; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Corinthians 2:16; 1 Corinthians 3:1; 1 Corinthians 3:2; 1 Corinthians 3:3; 1 Corinthians 3:8; 1 Corinthians 3:9; 1 Corinthians 3:19; 1 Corinthians 4 General Notes; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 1 Corinthians 4:8; 1 Corinthians 4:9; 1 Corinthians 4:10; 1 Corinthians 4:14; 1 Corinthians 4:15; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Corinthians 4:20; 1 Corinthians 4:21; 1 Corinthians 5 General Notes; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Corinthians 6 General Notes; 1 Corinthians 6:7; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Corinthians 6:10; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 1 Corinthians 6:15; 1 Corinthians 6:16; 1 Corinthians 6:17; 1 Corinthians 6:18; 1 Corinthians 6:19; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Corinthians 7:7; 1 Corinthians 7:9; 1 Corinthians 7:15; 1 Corinthians 7:17; 1 Corinthians 7:20; 1 Corinthians 7:22; 1 Corinthians 7:23; 1 Corinthians 7:24; 1 Corinthians 7:29; 1 Corinthians 7:33; 1 Corinthians 7:35; 1 Corinthians 7:37; 1 Corinthians 7:39; 1 Corinthians 8:1; 1 Corinthians 8:4; 1 Corinthians 8:7; 1 Corinthians 8:9; 1 Corinthians 8:10; 1 Corinthians 8:11; 1 Corinthians 8:12; 1 Corinthians 9 General Notes; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 1 Corinthians 9:2; 1 Corinthians 9:3; 1 Corinthians 9:11; 1 Corinthians 9:15; 1 Corinthians 9:16; 1 Corinthians 9:18; 1 Corinthians 9:19; 1 Corinthians 9:20; 1 Corinthians 9:21; 1 Corinthians 9:22; 1 Corinthians 9:25; 1 Corinthians 9:27; 1 Corinthians 10:2; 1 Corinthians 10:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11; 1 Corinthians 10:12; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 Corinthians 10:14; 1 Corinthians 10:17; 1 Corinthians 10:23; 1 Corinthians 11:2; 1 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Corinthians 11:4; 1 Corinthians 11:5; 1 Corinthians 11:11; 1 Corinthians 11:18; 1 Corinthians 11:24; 1 Corinthians 11:25; 1 Corinthians 11:29; 1 Corinthians 12:2; 1 Corinthians 12:13; 1 Corinthians 12:24; 1 Corinthians 12:27; 1 Corinthians 13:1; 1 Corinthians 13:5; 1 Corinthians 13:10; 1 Corinthians 13:11; 1 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Corinthians 14 General Notes; 1 Corinthians 14:1; 1 Corinthians 14:3; 1 Corinthians 14:4; 1 Corinthians 14:5; 1 Corinthians 14:12; 1 Corinthians 14:14; 1 Corinthians 14:16; 1 Corinthians 14:17; 1 Corinthians 14:19; 1 Corinthians 14:20; 1 Corinthians 14:25; 1 Corinthians 14:26; 1 Corinthians 14:28; 1 Corinthians 14:33; 1 Corinthians 14:34; 1 Corinthians 14:35; 1 Corinthians 15:1; 1 Corinthians 15:2; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 1 Corinthians 15:17; 1 Corinthians 15:18; 1 Corinthians 15:20; 1 Corinthians 15:22; 1 Corinthians 15:23; 1 Corinthians 15:31; 1 Corinthians 15:32; 1 Corinthians 15:34; 1 Corinthians 15:42; 1 Corinthians 15:43; 1 Corinthians 15:44; 1 Corinthians 15:45; 1 Corinthians 15:50; 1 Corinthians 15:53; 1 Corinthians 15:54; 1 Corinthians 15:55; 1 Corinthians 15:56; 1 Corinthians 15:58; 1 Corinthians 16:9; 1 Corinthians 16:13; 1 Corinthians 16:15; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 1 Corinthians 16:24

# 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:

*Figures of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

... 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](#).

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**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:10](#); [1 Corinthians 1:13](#); [1 Corinthians 1:15](#); [1 Corinthians 1:18](#); [1 Corinthians 1:24](#); [1 Corinthians 3:3](#); [1 Corinthians 3:11](#); [1 Corinthians 4:5](#); [1 Corinthians 4:19](#); [1 Corinthians 4:20](#); [1 Corinthians 7:2](#); [1 Corinthians 7:16](#); [1 Corinthians 7:37](#); [1 Corinthians 9:1](#); [1 Corinthians 9:4](#); [1 Corinthians 9:14](#); [1 Corinthians 9:22](#); [1 Corinthians 9:23](#); [1 Corinthians 10:16](#); [1 Corinthians 10:21](#); [1 Corinthians 11:2](#); [1 Corinthians 11:24](#); [1 Corinthians 11:25](#); [1 Corinthians 11:26](#); [1 Corinthians 11:27](#); [1 Corinthians 12:8](#); [1 Corinthians 12:10](#); [1 Corinthians 12:28](#); [1 Corinthians 12:30](#); [1 Corinthians 13:1](#); [1 Corinthians 13:8](#); [1 Corinthians 14:21](#); [1 Corinthians 14:25](#); [1 Corinthians 14:36](#); [1 Corinthians 15:2](#); [1 Corinthians 15:10](#); [1 Corinthians 15:50](#); [1 Corinthians 15:54](#)

# 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.

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:

*Parts of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

## 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.

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**.

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**Referenced in:** 1 Corinthians 1:19; 1 Corinthians 1:27; 1 Corinthians 2:6; 1 Corinthians 3:1; 1 Corinthians 3:3; 1 Corinthians 3:19; 1 Corinthians 3:20; 1 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Corinthians 5:13; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Corinthians 6:10; 1 Corinthians 7:8; 1 Corinthians 7:10; 1 Corinthians 8:9; 1 Corinthians 9:22; 1 Corinthians 10:33; 1 Corinthians 11:17; 1 Corinthians 15:12; 1 Corinthians 15:13; 1 Corinthians 15:15; 1 Corinthians 15:16; 1 Corinthians 15:20; 1 Corinthians 15:21; 1 Corinthians 15:29; 1 Corinthians 15:35; 1 Corinthians 15:42; 1 Corinthians 15:46; 1 Corinthians 15:48; 1 Corinthians 15:49; 1 Corinthians 15:50; 1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Corinthians 15:53; 1 Corinthians 15:54; 1 Corinthians 16:9

# Numbers

## Description

There are many numbers in the Bible. They can be written as words ("five") or as numerals ("5"). Some numbers are very large, such as "two hundred" (200), "twenty-two thousand" (22,000), or "one hundred million" (100,000,000). Some languages do not have words for all of these numbers. Translators need to decide how to translate numbers and whether to write them as words or numerals.

This page answers the question: *How do I translate numbers?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

*Translate Unknowns* ([UTA PDF](#))

Some numbers are exact and others are rounded.

Abram was **86** years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram. (Genesis 16:16 ULT)

Eighty-six (86) is an exact number.

That day about **3,000** of the people died. (Exodus 32:28b ULT)

Here the number three thousand (3,000) is a round number. It may have been a little more than that or a little less than that. The word "about" shows that it is not an exact number.

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not have words for some of these numbers.

## Translation Principles

- Exact numbers should be translated as closely and specifically as they can be.
- Rounded numbers can be translated more generally.

## Examples From the Bible

When Jared had lived **162** years, he became the father of Enoch. After he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived **800** years. He became the father of more sons and daughters. Jared lived **962** years, and then he died. (Genesis 5:18-20 ULT)

The numbers 162, 800, and 962 are exact numbers and should be translated with something as close to those numbers as possible.

Our sister, may you be the mother of **thousands of ten thousands**. (Genesis 24:60b ULT)

This is a rounded number. It does not say exactly how many descendants she should have, but it was a huge number of them.

## Translation Strategies

- (1) Write numbers using numerals.
- (2) Write numbers using your language's words or the Gateway Language words for those numbers.
- (3) Write numbers using words, and put the numerals in parentheses after them.
- (4) Combine words for large numbers.
- (5) Use a very general expression for very large rounded numbers and write the numeral in parentheses afterward.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

We will use the following verse in our examples:

Now, see, at great effort I have prepared for Yahweh's house **100,000** talents of gold, **1,000,000** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities. (1 Chronicles 22:14a ULT)

(1) Write numbers using numerals.

I have prepared for Yahweh's house **100,000** talents of gold, **1,000,000** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(2) Write numbers using your language's words or the Gateway Language words for those numbers.

I have prepared for Yahweh's house **one hundred thousand** talents of gold, **one million** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(3) Write numbers using words, and put the numerals in parenthesis after them.

I have prepared for Yahweh's house one **hundred thousand (100,000)** talents of gold, **one million (1,000,000)** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(4) Combine words for large numbers.

I have prepared for Yahweh's house **one hundred thousand** talents of gold, **a thousand thousand** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(5) Use a very general expression for very large rounded numbers and write the numeral in parentheses afterward.

I have prepared for Yahweh's house **a great amount of gold (100,000 talents), ten times that amount of silver (1,000,000 talents)**, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

## Consistency

Be consistent in your translations. Decide how the numbers will be translated, using numbers or numerals. There are different ways of being consistent.

- Use words to represent numbers all of the time. (You might have very long words.)
- Use numerals to represent numbers all of the time.
- Use words to represent the numbers that your language has words for and use numerals for the numbers that your language does not have words for.
- Use words for low numbers and numerals for high numbers.
- Use words for numbers that require few words and numerals for numbers that require more than a few words.
- Use words to represent numbers, and write the numerals in parentheses after them.

## Consistency in the ULT and UST

The *unfoldingWord® Literal Text* (ULT) and the *unfoldingWord® Simplified Text* (UST) use words for the numbers one through ten and use numerals for all numbers above ten.

When Adam had lived **130** years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, after his image, and he called his name Seth. After Adam became the father of Seth, he lived **800** years.

He became the father of more sons and daughters. Adam lived **930** years, and then he died.  
(Genesis 5:3-5 ULT)

Next we recommend you learn about:

*Ordinal Numbers* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Fractions* ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 10:8](#); [1 Corinthians 14:19](#); [1 Corinthians 15:4](#)

# Ordinal Numbers

## Description

Ordinal numbers are used in the Bible mainly to tell the position of something in a list.

And God has indeed appointed some in the church, **first** apostles, **second** prophets, **third** teachers, then miracles. (1 Corinthians 12:28a ULT)

This page answers the question: *What are ordinal numbers and how can I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Numbers \(UTA PDF\)](#)

This is a list of workers that God gave to the church in their order.

## Ordinal Numbers in English

Most ordinal numbers in English simply have “-th” added to the end.

Numeral	Number	Ordinal Number
4	four	fourth
10	ten	tenth
100	one hundred	one hundredth
1,000	one thousand	one thousandth

Some ordinal numbers in English do not follow that pattern.

Numeral	Number	Ordinal Number
1	one	first
2	two	second
3	three	third
5	five	fifth
12	twelve	twelfth

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not have special numbers for showing the order of items in a list. There are different ways to deal with this.

## Examples From the Bible

The **first** lot went to Jehoiarib, the **second** to Jedaiah, the **third** to Harim, the **fourth** to Seorim ... the **twenty-third** to Delaiah, and the **twenty-fourth** to Maaziah. (1 Chronicles 24:7-18 ULT)

The people cast lots and one went to each of these people in the order given.

You must place in it four rows of precious stones. The **first** row must have a ruby, a topaz, and a garnet. The **second** row must have an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. The **third** row

must have a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst. The **fourth** row must have a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper. They must be mounted in gold settings. (Exodus 28:17-20 ULT)

This describes four rows of stones. The first row is probably the top row, and the fourth row is probably the bottom row.

## Translation Strategies

If your language has ordinal numbers and using them would give the right meaning, consider using them. If not, here are some strategies to consider:

- (1) Use “one” with the first item and “another” or “the next” with the rest.
- (2) Tell the total number of items and then list them or the things associated with them.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Tell the total number of items, and use “one” with the first item and “another” or “the next” with the rest.

The first lot went to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah, the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim ... the twenty-third to Delaiah, and the twenty-fourth to Maaziah. (1 Chronicles 24:7-18 ULT)

There were **24** lots. **One lot** went to Jehoiarib, **another** to Jedaiah, **another** to Harim ... **another** to Delaiah, **and the last** went to Maaziah.

There were **24** lots. **One lot** went to Jehoiarib, **the next** to Jedaiah, **the next** to Harim ... **the next** to Delaiah, **and the last** went to Maaziah.

A river went out of Eden to water the garden. From there it divided and became **four** rivers. The name of **the first** is Pishon. It is the one which flows throughout the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. The gold of that land is good. There is also bdellium and the onyx stone there. The name of **the second** river is Gihon. This one flows throughout the whole land of Cush. The name of **the third** river is Tigris, which flows east of Asshur. **The fourth** river is the Euphrates. (Genesis 2:10-14 ULT)

A river went out of Eden to water the garden. From there it divided and became **four** rivers. The name of **one** is Pishon. It is the one which flows throughout the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. The gold of that land is good. There is also bdellium and the onyx stone there. The name of **the next** river is Gihon. This one flows throughout the whole land of Cush. The name of **the next** river is Tigris, which flows east of Asshur. The **last** river is the Euphrates.

- (2) Tell the total number of items and then list them or the things associated with them.

The **first** lot went to Jehoiarib, the **second** to Jedaiah, the **third** to Harim, the **fourth** to Seorim ... the **twenty-third** to Delaiah, and the **twenty-fourth** to Maaziah. (1 Chronicles 24:7-18 ULT)

They cast **24** lots. The lots went to Jerhoiarib, Jedaiah, Harim, Seorim ... Delaiah, and Maaziah.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Fractions \(UTA PDF\)](#)

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 11:18](#); [1 Corinthians 12:28](#); [1 Corinthians 15:4](#)



# 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.

This page answers the question: *What is parallelism?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

*Figures of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

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."

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* ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:27](#); [1 Corinthians 1:28](#); [1 Corinthians 7:19](#); [1 Corinthians 13:7](#); [1 Corinthians 13:11](#); [1 Corinthians 14:21](#); [1 Corinthians 14:24](#); [1 Corinthians 14:26](#); [1 Corinthians 15 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 15:14](#); [1 Corinthians 15:39](#); [1 Corinthians 15:41](#); [1 Corinthians 15:43](#); [1 Corinthians 15:50](#); [1 Corinthians 15:53](#); [1 Corinthians 15:54](#); [1 Corinthians 15:55](#)

# 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:

*Figures of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

## 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:

*Apostrophe* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Biblical Imagery — Common Patterns* ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 8:8](#); [1 Corinthians 8:13](#); [1 Corinthians 10:13](#); [1 Corinthians 11:14](#); [1 Corinthians 12 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 12:15](#); [1 Corinthians 12:16](#); [1 Corinthians 12:21](#); [1 Corinthians 12:25](#); [1 Corinthians 12:26](#); [1 Corinthians 13 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 13:4](#); [1 Corinthians 13:5](#); [1 Corinthians 13:6](#); [1 Corinthians 13:7](#); [1 Corinthians 13:8](#); [1 Corinthians 14:36](#); [1 Corinthians 15:26](#)

# 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

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:

*Parts of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Sentence Structure* ([UTA PDF](#))

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. In languages that mark the difference, the expression of inalienable possession and alienable possession will be different.

## 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)

**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**.

"



**Referenced in:** 1 Corinthians 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:6; 1 Corinthians 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:9; 1 Corinthians 1:12; 1 Corinthians 1:18; 1 Corinthians 1:19; 1 Corinthians 1:20; 1 Corinthians 1:21; 1 Corinthians 1:24; 1 Corinthians 1:25; 1 Corinthians 1:27; 1 Corinthians 1:28; 1 Corinthians 2:1; 1 Corinthians 2:4; 1 Corinthians 2:5; 1 Corinthians 2:6; 1 Corinthians 2:7; 1 Corinthians 2:8; 1 Corinthians 2:9; 1 Corinthians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 2:16; 1 Corinthians 3:4; 1 Corinthians 3:9; 1 Corinthians 3:19; 1 Corinthians 3:23; 1 Corinthians 4:1; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 1 Corinthians 4:13; 1 Corinthians 4:21; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Corinthians 5:8; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 1 Corinthians 7:22; 1 Corinthians 7:32; 1 Corinthians 7:33; 1 Corinthians 7:34; 1 Corinthians 8:4; 1 Corinthians 9:2; 1 Corinthians 9:21; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 1 Corinthians 10:18; 1 Corinthians 10:20; 1 Corinthians 10:21; 1 Corinthians 10:24; 1 Corinthians 10:33; 1 Corinthians 11:10; 1 Corinthians 11:27; 1 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:10; 1 Corinthians 14:12; 1 Corinthians 14:33; 1 Corinthians 14:36; 1 Corinthians 14:37; 1 Corinthians 15:15; 1 Corinthians 15:23; 1 Corinthians 15:25; 1 Corinthians 15:48; 1 Corinthians 15:58

## 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.

This page answers the question: *What is the predictive past?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

*Figures of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Verbs* ([UTA PDF](#))

### 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.

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."

"

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 3:13](#); [1 Corinthians 5:13](#); [1 Corinthians 6:2](#); [1 Corinthians 7:37](#); [1 Corinthians 7:38](#); [1 Corinthians 9:15](#); [1 Corinthians 11:18](#); [1 Corinthians 12:31](#); [1 Corinthians 14:37](#); [1 Corinthians 15:22](#); [1 Corinthians 15:49](#); [1 Corinthians 16:5](#); [1 Corinthians 16:7](#); [1 Corinthians 16:12](#)

# 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:

[Pronouns \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Sentence Structure \(UTA PDF\)](#)

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.

"

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:5](#); [1 Corinthians 1:8](#); [1 Corinthians 1:26](#); [1 Corinthians 1:30](#); [1 Corinthians 2:7](#); [1 Corinthians 2:8](#); [1 Corinthians 3:4](#); [1 Corinthians 3:5](#); [1 Corinthians 3:10](#); [1 Corinthians 3:13](#); [1 Corinthians 3:17](#); [1](#)

[Corinthians 4:2](#); [1 Corinthians 4:4](#); [1 Corinthians 4:6](#); [1 Corinthians 4:7](#); [1 Corinthians 4:14](#); [1 Corinthians 4:17](#); [1 Corinthians 4:18](#); [1 Corinthians 6:5](#); [1 Corinthians 6:11](#); [1 Corinthians 6:13](#); [1 Corinthians 7:6](#); [1 Corinthians 7:28](#); [1 Corinthians 7:29](#); [1 Corinthians 7:35](#); [1 Corinthians 7:36](#); [1 Corinthians 7:37](#); [1 Corinthians 8:3](#); [1 Corinthians 8:12](#); [1 Corinthians 9:3](#); [1 Corinthians 9:8](#); [1 Corinthians 9:10](#); [1 Corinthians 9:15](#); [1 Corinthians 9:17](#); [1 Corinthians 10:6](#); [1 Corinthians 10:11](#); [1 Corinthians 10:15](#); [1 Corinthians 10:19](#); [1 Corinthians 10:25](#); [1 Corinthians 10:27](#); [1 Corinthians 10:29](#); [1 Corinthians 11:5](#); [1 Corinthians 11:17](#); [1 Corinthians 11:24](#); [1 Corinthians 11:25](#); [1 Corinthians 12:8](#); [1 Corinthians 12:9](#); [1 Corinthians 12:10](#); [1 Corinthians 12:15](#); [1 Corinthians 12:16](#); [1 Corinthians 12:23](#); [1 Corinthians 12:28](#); [1 Corinthians 13 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 13:12](#); [1 Corinthians 14:5](#); [1 Corinthians 14:26](#); [1 Corinthians 14:29](#); [1 Corinthians 14:30](#); [1 Corinthians 15:10](#); [1 Corinthians 15:11](#); [1 Corinthians 15:24](#); [1 Corinthians 15:25](#); [1 Corinthians 15:27](#); [1 Corinthians 15:29](#); [1 Corinthians 15:38](#); [1 Corinthians 15:50](#); [1 Corinthians 16:16](#); [1 Corinthians 16:18](#)

# Proverbs

## Description

Proverbs are short sayings that give wise advice or teach something that is generally true about life. People enjoy proverbs because they give a lot of wisdom in few words. Proverbs in the Bible often use metaphor and parallelism. Proverbs should not be understood as absolute and unchangeable laws. Rather, proverbs offer general advice to a person about how to live his life.

This page answers the question: *What are proverbs, and how can I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

*Metaphor* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Parallelism* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Writing Styles* ([UTA PDF](#))

Hatred stirs up conflicts, but love covers over all offenses. (Proverbs 10:12 ULT)

Here is another example from the book of Proverbs.

Look at the ant, you lazy person, consider her ways, and be wise. It has no commander, officer, or ruler, yet it prepares its food in the summer, and during the harvest it stores up what it will eat. (Proverbs 6:6-8 ULT)

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Each language has its own ways of saying proverbs. There are many proverbs in the Bible. They need to be translated in the way that people say proverbs in your language so that people recognize them as proverbs and understand what they teach.

## Examples From the Bible

A good name is to be chosen over great riches, and favor is better than silver and gold. (Proverbs 22:1 ULT)

This means that it is better to be a good person and to have a good reputation than it is to have a lot of money.

Like vinegar on the teeth and smoke in the eyes, so is the sluggard to those who send him. (Proverbs 10:26 ULT)

This means that a lazy person is very annoying to those who send him to do something.

The way of Yahweh protects those who have integrity, but it is destruction for the wicked. (Proverbs 10:29 ULT)

This means that Yahweh protects people who do what is right, but he destroys those who are wicked.

## Translation Strategies

If translating a proverb literally would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider doing that. If not, here are some options:

- (1) Find out how people say proverbs in your language, and use one of those ways.
- (2) If certain objects in the proverb are not known to many people in your language group, consider replacing them with objects that people know and that function in the same way in your language.
- (3) Substitute a proverb in your language that has the same teaching as the proverb in the Bible.
- (4) Give the same teaching but not in a form of a proverb.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Find out how people say proverbs in your language, and use one of those ways.

A good name is to be chosen over great riches,  
and favor is better than silver and gold. (Proverbs 22:1 ULT)

Here are some ideas for ways that people might say a proverb in their language.

It is better to have a good name than to have great riches,  
and to be favored by people than to have silver and gold.

Wise people choose a good name over great riches,  
and favor over silver and gold.

Try to have a good reputation rather than great riches.

Will riches really help you?  
I would rather have a good reputation.

(2) If certain objects in the proverb are not known to many people in your language group, consider replacing them with objects that people know and that function in the same way in your language.

Like **snow in summer** or rain in harvest,  
so a fool does not deserve honor. (Proverbs 26:1 ULT)

It is not natural for **a cold wind to blow in the hot season** or for it to rain  
in the harvest season;  
And it is not natural to honor a foolish person.

(3) Substitute a proverb in your language that has the same teaching as the proverb in the Bible.

Do not boast about tomorrow,  
for you do not know what a day may bring. (Proverbs 27:1a ULT)

Do not count your chickens before they hatch.

(4) Give the same teaching but not in a form of a proverb.

There is a generation that curses their father  
and does not bless their mother.  
There is a generation that is pure in their own eyes,  
and yet they are not washed of their filth. (Proverbs 30:11-12 ULT)

People who do not respect their parents think that they are righteous,  
and they do not turn away from their sin.

"

Referenced in: [1 Corinthians 15:33](#)



# Quotations and Quote Margins

## Description

This page answers the question: *What are quote margins and where should I put them?*

When saying that someone said something, we often tell who spoke, whom they spoke to, and what they said. The information about who spoke and whom they spoke to is called the quote margin. What the person said is the quotation. (This is also called a quote.) In some languages the quote margin may come first, last, or even in between two parts of the quotation.

The quote margins are bolded below.

- **She said**, “The food is ready. Come and eat.”
- “The food is ready. Come and eat,” **she said**.
- “The food is ready,” **she said**. “Come and eat.”

Also in some languages, the quote margin may have more than one verb meaning “said.”

But his mother **answered** and **said**, “No. Rather, he will be called John.” (Luke 1:60 ULT)

When writing that someone said something, some languages put the quote (what was said) in quotation marks called inverted commas (“ ”). Some languages use other symbols around the quotation, such as these angle quote marks (« »), or something else.

## Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Translators need to put the quote margin where it is most clear and natural in their language.
- Translators need to decide whether they want the quote margin to have one or two verbs meaning “said.”
- Translators need to decide which marks to use around the quotation.

## Examples From the Bible

### Quote margin before the quote

**Then Zechariah said to the angel**, “How will I know this? For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in her days.” (Luke 1:18 ULT)

Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and **they said to him**, “Teacher, what should we do?” (Luke 3:12 ULT)

So **he said to them**, “Collect nothing more than what you have been ordered.” (Luke 3:13 ULT)

### Quote margin after the quote

Yahweh relented concerning this. “It will not happen,” **he said**. (Amos 7:3 ULT)

### Quote margin between two parts of the quote

“I will hide my face from them,” **he said**, “and I will see what their end will be; for they are a perverse generation, children who are unfaithful.” (Deuteronomy 32:20 ULT)

For look, days are coming—**this is Yahweh’s declaration**—when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah. (Jeremiah 30:3a ULT)

## Translation Strategies

- (1) Decide where to put the quote margin.
- (2) Decide whether to use one or two words meaning "said."

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Decide where to put the quote margin.

**He said**, "Therefore, those among you who are leaders should go down with us. If there is something wrong with the man, let them accuse him." (Acts 25:5 ULT)

"Therefore, those who can should go there with us," **he said**. "If there is something wrong with the man, you should accuse him."

"Therefore, those who can should go there with us. If there is something wrong with the man, you should accuse him," **he said**.

"Therefore, those who can," **he said**, "should go there with us. If there is something wrong with the man, you should accuse him."

- (2) Decide whether to use one or two words meaning "said."

But his mother **answered and said**, "No. Rather, he will be called John." (Luke 1:60 ULT)

But his mother **replied**, "No. Rather, he will be called John."

But his mother **said**, "No. Rather, he will be called John."

But his mother **answered** like this. "No. Rather, he will be called John," she **said**.

Next we recommend you learn about:

*Direct and Indirect Quotations* ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:19](#); [1 Corinthians 1:31](#); [1 Corinthians 2:9](#); [1 Corinthians 2:16](#); [1 Corinthians 3:19](#); [1 Corinthians 3:20](#); [1 Corinthians 5:13](#); [1 Corinthians 6 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 6:12](#); [1 Corinthians 6:13](#); [1 Corinthians 6:16](#); [1 Corinthians 9:9](#); [1 Corinthians 10 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 10:7](#); [1 Corinthians 10:23](#); [1 Corinthians 10:26](#); [1 Corinthians 14:21](#); [1 Corinthians 15 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 15:3](#); [1 Corinthians 15:4](#); [1 Corinthians 15:27](#); [1 Corinthians 15:32](#); [1 Corinthians 15:33](#); [1 Corinthians 15:35](#); [1 Corinthians 15:45](#); [1 Corinthians 15:54](#); [1 Corinthians 15:55](#)

# 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." In English, these pronouns can also be used to emphasize the person to whom they refer. Other languages may have other ways to do both of these things.

This page answers the question: *What are reflexive pronouns?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Pronouns \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Sentence Structure \(UTA PDF\)](#)

## 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 or something did something alone or was alone

## Examples From the Bible

### To show that the same person or thing fills two different roles in a sentence

If **I** testify about **myself**, my testimony is not 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)

### 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)

Then Festus answered that Paul was being held at Caesarea but that **he himself** was about to depart soon. (Acts 25:4 ULT)

### To show that someone did something alone, or that something was 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)

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 testify about **myself**, my testimony is not true. (John 5:31)

“If I **self-testify**, my testimony is not 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)

“**The one who** took our sickness and bore our diseases **was Jesus**.”

**Jesus himself** was not baptizing, but his disciples were. (John 4:2)

“**It was not Jesus who** was baptizing, but his disciples.”

- (3) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by adding something to that word or putting another word with it.

But Jesus said this to test Philip, for he **himself** knew what he was going to do. (John 6:6)

But Jesus said this to test Philip, for, **as for him, he** knew what he was going to do.

Then Festus answered that Paul was being held at Caesarea but that **he himself** was about to depart soon. (Acts 25:4 ULT)

Then Festus answered that Paul was being held at Caesarea but that, **for his part, he** was about to depart soon.

- (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 it’s own place**.”

”

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 2:15](#); [1 Corinthians 3:13](#); [1 Corinthians 3:15](#); [1 Corinthians 9:27](#); [1 Corinthians 11:14](#); [1 Corinthians 15:28](#)

## 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:

*Figures of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Sentence Types* ([UTA PDF](#))

## 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.

But you, why do you judge your brother? And you also, why do you despise your brother? (Romans 14:10 ULT)

Paul used these rhetorical questions **to rebuke** the Romans for doing what they should not do.

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 express surprise or other emotion? 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!

But you, **why do you judge your brother?** And you also, **why do you despise your brother?** (Romans 14:10 ULT)

Do you think it is good to judge your brother? Do you think it is good to despise your brother?

"



**Referenced in:** Introduction to 1 Corinthians; 1 Corinthians 1 General Notes; 1 Corinthians 1:13; 1 Corinthians 1:20; 1 Corinthians 2:11; 1 Corinthians 2:16; 1 Corinthians 3 General Notes; 1 Corinthians 3:3; 1 Corinthians 3:4; 1 Corinthians 3:5; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 4 General Notes; 1 Corinthians 4:7; 1 Corinthians 4:21; 1 Corinthians 5 General Notes; 1 Corinthians 5:6; 1 Corinthians 5:12; 1 Corinthians 6 General Notes; 1 Corinthians 6:1; 1 Corinthians 6:2; 1 Corinthians 6:3; 1 Corinthians 6:4; 1 Corinthians 6:5; 1 Corinthians 6:6; 1 Corinthians 6:7; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Corinthians 6:15; 1 Corinthians 6:16; 1 Corinthians 6:19; 1 Corinthians 7 General Notes; 1 Corinthians 7:16; 1 Corinthians 7:18; 1 Corinthians 7:21; 1 Corinthians 7:27; 1 Corinthians 8:10; 1 Corinthians 9 General Notes; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 1 Corinthians 9:4; 1 Corinthians 9:5; 1 Corinthians 9:6; 1 Corinthians 9:7; 1 Corinthians 9:8; 1 Corinthians 9:9; 1 Corinthians 9:10; 1 Corinthians 9:11; 1 Corinthians 9:12; 1 Corinthians 9:13; 1 Corinthians 9:18; 1 Corinthians 9:24; 1 Corinthians 10 General Notes; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 1 Corinthians 10:18; 1 Corinthians 10:19; 1 Corinthians 10:22; 1 Corinthians 10:29; 1 Corinthians 10:30; 1 Corinthians 11 General Notes; 1 Corinthians 11:13; 1 Corinthians 11:14; 1 Corinthians 11:15; 1 Corinthians 11:22; 1 Corinthians 12 General Notes; 1 Corinthians 12:17; 1 Corinthians 12:19; 1 Corinthians 12:29; 1 Corinthians 12:30; 1 Corinthians 14 General Notes; 1 Corinthians 14:6; 1 Corinthians 14:7; 1 Corinthians 14:8; 1 Corinthians 14:9; 1 Corinthians 14:15; 1 Corinthians 14:16; 1 Corinthians 14:23; 1 Corinthians 14:26; 1 Corinthians 14:36; 1 Corinthians 15 General Notes; 1 Corinthians 15:12; 1 Corinthians 15:29; 1 Corinthians 15:30; 1 Corinthians 15:32; 1 Corinthians 15:55

# 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:

*Figures of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

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* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Biblical Imagery — Common Patterns* ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 4:13](#)

# 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)

■ I looked on all the deeds that **I** had accomplished

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:

*Figures of Speech* ([UTA PDF](#))

Metonymy ([UTA PDF](#))

Biblical Imagery — Common Metonymies ([UTA PDF](#))

Next we recommend you learn about:

Metonymy ([UTA PDF](#))

Biblical Imagery — Common Metonymies ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:21](#); [1 Corinthians 1:26](#); [1 Corinthians 1:27](#); [1 Corinthians 1:28](#); [1 Corinthians 2:9](#); [1 Corinthians 3:13](#); [1 Corinthians 3:14](#); [1 Corinthians 3:15](#); [1 Corinthians 4:13](#); [1 Corinthians 7:31](#); [1 Corinthians 9:27](#); [1 Corinthians 10:18](#); [1 Corinthians 11:32](#); [1 Corinthians 16:7](#)

## 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.

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:

*Choosing a Source Text* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Original Manuscripts* ([UTA PDF](#))

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.

### Examples From the Bible

Matthew 18:10-11 ULT has a footnote about verse 11.

<sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> <sup>[1]</sup>

<sup>[1]</sup> 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."] <sup>[2]</sup>

<sup>[2]</sup> 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.

<sup>14</sup> He called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand. <sup>15</sup> 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." <sup>16</sup> [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.

<sup>14</sup> He called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand. <sup>15</sup> 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." <sup>16</sup> [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.

<sup>14</sup> He called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand. <sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> 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:

*Chapter and Verse Numbers* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Original Manuscripts* ([UTA PDF](#))

*Terms to Know* ([UTA PDF](#))

*The Original and Source Languages* ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** [Introduction to 1 Corinthians](#); [1 Corinthians 2:1](#); [1 Corinthians 5:13](#); [1 Corinthians 6:20](#); [1 Corinthians 9:20](#); [1 Corinthians 10:9](#); [1 Corinthians 10:28](#); [1 Corinthians 13:3](#); [1 Corinthians 14:38](#); [1 Corinthians 15:49](#); [1 Corinthians 16:24](#)



## Third-Person Imperatives

### Description

This page answers the question: *How do I translate third-person imperatives into my language?*

The languages of the Bible have verb forms that can give commands, instructions or other directive speech in the third person. In other words, these directives address “he,” “she,” “it,” or “they” rather than “you.”

### Reasons This Is a Translation Issue:

Many languages, including English, do not have these verb forms and so they must communicate this kind of directive speech in other ways. In English, we normally represent these third-person imperatives by putting “let” before the subject or verb. This is actually one of the translation strategies, since English does not have third-person imperatives.

### Examples From the Bible

Let your kingdom come, let your will be done as in heaven also on earth. (Matthew 6:9 ULT)

In this prayer, Jesus uses two third-person imperatives. The first one tells God’s kingdom to come, and the second one tells God’s will to be done. Of course, a kingdom and a will cannot hear Jesus, so Jesus is using these verb forms to communicate to God that Jesus desires that these things happen.

Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks he is wise in this age, let him become a “fool,” that he may become wise. (1 Corinthians 3:18 ULT)

In this verse, Paul uses third-person imperatives to give a warning and an instruction. It may be that using this third-person form was more polite than if he had used second-person imperatives.

But because of immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. (1 Corinthians 7:2 ULT)

Here again Paul uses two third-person imperatives to instruct the Corinthian church. Since he had just recommended a celibate life in the previous verse, these imperatives have the sense of giving advice rather than command.

Then God said, “Let there be light.” And there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

The Biblical Hebrew verb form used here is equivalent to the third-person imperative in Greek. Here, God commands in the third person that light come into existence, so it does.

...let him do to me just as {is} good in his eyes. (2 Samuel 15:26 ULT)

David uses the third-person form to express his willingness for God to do to him whatever God wants to do.

### Translation Strategies

If your language has third-person imperative forms and would use them in the way that the biblical languages do, then please use them. If not, then consider these strategies.

- (1) Use a form that your language has that indicates that this is the will or wish of the speaker.
- (2) If appropriate, use a second-person imperative.
- (3) Use an explicit reference to the function of the imperative.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use a form that your language has that indicates that this is the will or wish of the speaker.

Let your kingdom come, let your will be done as in heaven also on earth. (Matthew 6:9 ULT)

(Since English does not have third-person imperatives, it follows this strategy and uses “let” to indicate that this is the will or wish of the speaker.)

May your kingdom come, may your will be done as in heaven also on earth.

Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks he is wise in this age, let him become a “fool,” that he may become wise. (1 Corinthians 3:18 ULT)

(Since English does not have third-person imperatives, it follows this strategy and uses “let” to indicate that this is the will or wish of the speaker.)

No one should deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks he is wise in this age, he should become a “fool,” that he may become wise.

...let him do to me just as {is} good in his eyes. (2 Samuel 15:26 ULT)

(Since English does not have third-person imperatives, it follows this strategy and uses “let” to indicate that this is the will or wish of the speaker.)

...he may do to me just as {is} good in his eyes. (2 Samuel 15:26 ULT)

(2) If appropriate, use a second-person imperative.

Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks he is wise in this age, let him become a “fool,” that he may become wise. (1 Corinthians 3:18 ULT)

Do not deceive yourselves. If you think you are wise in this age, then become a “fool,” that you may become wise.

Then God said, “Let there be light.” And there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

Then God said, “Light, come into being.” And there was light.

...let him do to me just as {is} good in his eyes. (2 Samuel 15:26 ULT)

...Yahweh, do to me just as {is} good in your eyes.

(3) Use an explicit reference to the function of the imperative.

Let your kingdom come, let your will be done as in heaven also on earth. (Matthew 6:9 ULT)

We pray that your kingdom come, we pray that your will be done as in heaven also on earth.

Then God said, “Let there be light.” And there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

Then God said, “I command light to be.” And there was light.

But because of immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. (1 Corinthians 7:2 ULT)

But because of immorality, I advise each man to have his own wife, and I advise each woman to have her own husband.

...let him do to me just as {is} good in his eyes. (2 Samuel 15:26 ULT)

...he has my permission to do to me just as {is} good in his eyes.

See also [Imperatives – Other Uses](#)

"

**Referenced in:** 1 Corinthians 1:31; 1 Corinthians 3:10; 1 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Corinthians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 4:1; 1 Corinthians 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:3; 1 Corinthians 7:9; 1 Corinthians 7:11; 1 Corinthians 7:12; 1 Corinthians 7:13; 1 Corinthians 7:15; 1 Corinthians 7:17; 1 Corinthians 7:18; 1 Corinthians 7:20; 1 Corinthians 7:21; 1 Corinthians 7:24; 1 Corinthians 7:36; 1 Corinthians 10:12; 1 Corinthians 10:24; 1 Corinthians 11:6; 1 Corinthians 11:28; 1 Corinthians 11:34; 1 Corinthians 14:13; 1 Corinthians 14:26; 1 Corinthians 14:27; 1 Corinthians 14:28; 1 Corinthians 14:29; 1 Corinthians 14:30; 1 Corinthians 14:34; 1 Corinthians 14:35; 1 Corinthians 14:37; 1 Corinthians 14:38; 1 Corinthians 14:40; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 1 Corinthians 16:11; 1 Corinthians 16:14; 1 Corinthians 16:22

## Translate Unknowns

While working to translate the Bible, you (the translator) might find yourself asking: “How do I translate words like lion, fig tree, mountain, priest, or temple when people in my culture have never seen these things and we do not have a word for them?”

This page answers the question: *How can I translate ideas that my readers are not familiar with?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Sentence Structure \(UTA PDF\)](#)

## Description

Unknowns are things that occur in the source text that are not known to the people of your culture. The unfoldingWord® Translation Words pages and the unfoldingWord® Translation Notes will help you understand what they are. After you understand them, you will need to find ways to refer to those things so that people who read your translation will understand what they are.

They said to him, “We have nothing here except five loaves of **bread** and two fish.” (Matthew 14:17 ULT)

Bread is a particular food made by mixing finely crushed grains with oil, and then cooking the mixture so that it is dry. (Grains are the seeds of a kind of grass.) In some cultures people do not have bread and do not know what it is.

## Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Readers may not know some of the things that are in the Bible because those things are not part of their own culture.
- Readers may have difficulty understanding a text if they do not know some of the things that are mentioned in it.

## Translation Principles

- Use words that are already part of your language if possible.
- Keep expressions short if possible.
- Represent God’s commands and historical facts accurately.

## Examples From the Bible

So I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins, a hideout for **jackals**. (Jeremiah 9:11a ULT)

Jackals are wild animals like dogs that live in only a few parts of the world. So they are not known in many places.

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous **wolves**. (Matthew 7:15 ULT)

If wolves do not live where the translation will be read, the readers may not understand that they are fierce, wild animals like dogs that attack and eat sheep.

They offered him wine mixed with **myrrh**, but he did not drink it. (Mark 15:23 ULT)

People may not know what myrrh is and that it was used as a medicine.

... to him who made **great lights** ... (Psalm 136:7a ULT)

Some languages have terms for things that give light, like the sun and fire, but they have no general term for lights.

Your sins ... will be white like **snow**. (Isaiah 1:18b ULT)

People in many parts of the world have not seen snow, but they may have seen it in pictures.

## Translation Strategies

Here are ways you might translate a term that is not known in your language:

- (1) Use a phrase that describes what the unknown item is, or what is important about the unknown item for the verse being translated.
- (2) Substitute something similar from your language if doing so does not falsely represent a historical fact.
- (3) Copy the word from another language, and add a general word or descriptive phrase to help people understand it.
- (4) Use a word that is more general in meaning.
- (5) Use a word or phrase that is more specific in meaning.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use a phrase that describes what the unknown item is, or what is important about the unknown item for the verse being translated.

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but are inwardly they are **ravenous wolves**. (Matthew 7:15 ULT)

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but **inwardly they are very hungry and dangerous animals**.

"Ravenous wolves" is part of a metaphor here, so the reader needs to know that they are very dangerous to sheep in order to understand this metaphor. (If sheep are also unknown, then you will need to also use one of the translation strategies to translate sheep, or change the metaphor to something else, using a translation strategy for metaphors. See [Translating Metaphors](#).)

"We have nothing here except five **loaves of bread** and two fish." (Matthew 14:17 ULT)

We have nothing here except five **loaves of baked grain seeds** and two fish.

- (2) Substitute something similar from your language if doing so does not falsely represent a historical fact.

Your sins ... will be white like **snow**. (Isaiah 1:18b ULT) This verse is not about snow. It uses snow in a figure of speech to help people understand how white something will be.

Your sins ... will be white like **milk**.

Your sins ... will be white like **the moon**.

- (3) Copy the word from another language, and add a general word or descriptive phrase to help people understand it.

Then they tried to give Jesus wine that was mixed with **myrrh**. But he refused to drink it. (Mark 15:23 ULT) — People may understand better what myrrh is if it is used with the general word "medicine."

Then they tried to give Jesus wine that was mixed with **a medicine called myrrh**. But he refused to drink it.

"We have nothing here except five **loaves of bread** and two fish." (Matthew 14:17 ULT) —  
People may understand better what bread is if it is used with a phrase that tells what it is made  
of (seeds) and how it is prepared (crushed and baked).

We have nothing here except five loaves of **baked crushed seed bread**  
and two fish.

(4) Use a word that is more general in meaning.

I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins, a hideout for **jackals** (Jeremiah 9:11a ULT)

I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins, a hideout for **wild dogs**

"We have nothing here except five **loaves of bread** and two fish." (Matthew 14:17 ULT)

We have nothing here except five **loaves of baked food** and two fish.

(5) Use a word or phrase that is more specific in meaning.

... to him who made **great lights** ... (Psalm 136:7a ULT)

to him who made **the sun and the moon**

Next we recommend you learn about:

*Copy or Borrow Words* ([UTA PDF](#))

*How to Translate Names* ([UTA PDF](#))

**Referenced in:** 1 Corinthians 1:8; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 1 Corinthians 1:11; 1 Corinthians 1:16; 1 Corinthians 1:19; 1 Corinthians 1:20; 1 Corinthians 1:22; 1 Corinthians 1:24; 1 Corinthians 1:28; 1 Corinthians 2:1; 1 Corinthians 2:4; 1 Corinthians 2:6; 1 Corinthians 2:10; 1 Corinthians 2:11; 1 Corinthians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 1 Corinthians 2:15; 1 Corinthians 3:10; 1 Corinthians 3:12; 1 Corinthians 3:15; 1 Corinthians 4:3; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 1 Corinthians 4:9; 1 Corinthians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 4:12; 1 Corinthians 4:21; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Corinthians 5:8; 1 Corinthians 5:9; 1 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 1 Corinthians 6:1; 1 Corinthians 6:2; 1 Corinthians 6:3; 1 Corinthians 6:4; 1 Corinthians 6:5; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Corinthians 6:10; 1 Corinthians 6:12; 1 Corinthians 6:13; 1 Corinthians 7:5; 1 Corinthians 7:6; 1 Corinthians 7:8; 1 Corinthians 7:14; 1 Corinthians 7:18; 1 Corinthians 7:25; 1 Corinthians 7:26; 1 Corinthians 7:28; 1 Corinthians 7:31; 1 Corinthians 7:32; 1 Corinthians 7:33; 1 Corinthians 7:35; 1 Corinthians 7:36; 1 Corinthians 7:38; 1 Corinthians 8:1; 1 Corinthians 8:4; 1 Corinthians 8:7; 1 Corinthians 8:10; 1 Corinthians 9:5; 1 Corinthians 9:7; 1 Corinthians 9:8; 1 Corinthians 9:9; 1 Corinthians 9:13; 1 Corinthians 9:15; 1 Corinthians 9:17; 1 Corinthians 9:18; 1 Corinthians 9:19; 1 Corinthians 9:20; 1 Corinthians 9:21; 1 Corinthians 9:22; 1 Corinthians 9:23; 1 Corinthians 9:24; 1 Corinthians 9:25; 1 Corinthians 10:3; 1 Corinthians 10:4; 1 Corinthians 10:10; 1 Corinthians 10:11; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 1 Corinthians 10:17; 1 Corinthians 10:19; 1 Corinthians 10:26; 1 Corinthians 11:4; 1 Corinthians 11:5; 1 Corinthians 11:10; 1 Corinthians 11:13; 1 Corinthians 11:14; 1 Corinthians 11:15; 1 Corinthians 11:18; 1 Corinthians 11:19; 1 Corinthians 11:21; 1 Corinthians 11:23; 1 Corinthians 11:24; 1 Corinthians 12:1; 1 Corinthians 12:2; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 1 Corinthians 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12:10; 1 Corinthians 12:11; 1 Corinthians 12:18; 1 Corinthians 12:22; 1 Corinthians 12:27; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 1 Corinthians 13:1; 1 Corinthians 13:5; 1 Corinthians 13:7; 1 Corinthians 13:8; 1 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Corinthians 14:1; 1 Corinthians 14:2; 1 Corinthians 14:7; 1 Corinthians 14:9; 1 Corinthians 14:10; 1 Corinthians 14:11; 1 Corinthians 14:16; 1 Corinthians 14:23; 1 Corinthians 14:24; 1 Corinthians 14:32; 1 Corinthians 14:40; 1 Corinthians 15:6; 1 Corinthians 15:8; 1 Corinthians 15:9; 1 Corinthians 15:18; 1 Corinthians 15:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24; 1 Corinthians 15:26; 1 Corinthians 15:27; 1 Corinthians 15:32; 1 Corinthians 15:33; 1 Corinthians 15:35; 1 Corinthians 15:36; 1 Corinthians 15:37; 1 Corinthians 15:38; 1 Corinthians 15:39; 1 Corinthians 15:44; 1 Corinthians 15:45; 1 Corinthians 15:46; 1 Corinthians 15:50; 1 Corinthians 15:51; 1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Corinthians 15:53; 1 Corinthians 15:54; 1 Corinthians 16:1; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 1 Corinthians 16:3; 1 Corinthians 16:6; 1 Corinthians 16:11; 1 Corinthians 16:12; 1 Corinthians 16:15; 1 Corinthians 16:17; 1 Corinthians 16:20

## 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, {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:

Create Faithful Translations ([UTA PDF](#))

Son of God and God the Father ([UTA PDF](#))

## 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.”)

”

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 1:9](#); [1 Corinthians 8:6](#); [1 Corinthians 15 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 15:24](#); [1 Corinthians 15:28](#)



## 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.

### 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)

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:

[Pronouns \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Generic Noun Phrases \(UTA PDF\)](#)

### 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.”

”

**Referenced in:** 1 Corinthians 1:10; 1 Corinthians 1:11; 1 Corinthians 1:25; 1 Corinthians 1:26; 1 Corinthians 2:1; 1 Corinthians 2:5; 1 Corinthians 2:9; 1 Corinthians 2:11; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 1 Corinthians 2:15; 1 Corinthians 3:1; 1 Corinthians 3:3; 1 Corinthians 3:4; 1 Corinthians 3:8; 1 Corinthians 3:10; 1 Corinthians 3:14; 1 Corinthians 3:15; 1 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Corinthians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 4:1; 1 Corinthians 4:6; 1 Corinthians 4:9; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 1 Corinthians 6:5; 1 Corinthians 6:6; 1 Corinthians 6:8; 1 Corinthians 6:18; 1 Corinthians 7:7; 1 Corinthians 7:15; 1 Corinthians 7:17; 1 Corinthians 7:18; 1 Corinthians 7:20; 1 Corinthians 7:23; 1 Corinthians 7:24; 1 Corinthians 7:26; 1 Corinthians 7:29; 1 Corinthians 7:32; 1 Corinthians 7:34; 1 Corinthians 7:36; 1 Corinthians 8:2; 1 Corinthians 8:10; 1 Corinthians 8:11; 1 Corinthians 8:12; 1 Corinthians 8:13; 1 Corinthians 9:7; 1 Corinthians 9:8; 1 Corinthians 10:1; 1 Corinthians 10:12; 1 Corinthians 10:24; 1 Corinthians 11 General Notes; 1 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Corinthians 11:21; 1 Corinthians 11:28; 1 Corinthians 11:29; 1 Corinthians 11:33; 1 Corinthians 11:34; 1 Corinthians 12:1; 1 Corinthians 14:2; 1 Corinthians 14:3; 1 Corinthians 14:5; 1 Corinthians 14:6; 1 Corinthians 14:13; 1 Corinthians 14:16; 1 Corinthians 14:20; 1 Corinthians 14:24; 1 Corinthians 14:25; 1 Corinthians 14:26; 1 Corinthians 14:28; 1 Corinthians 14:37; 1 Corinthians 14:38; 1 Corinthians 14:39; 1 Corinthians 15:1; 1 Corinthians 15:6; 1 Corinthians 15:23; 1 Corinthians 15:31; 1 Corinthians 15:32; 1 Corinthians 15:39; 1 Corinthians 15:45; 1 Corinthians 15:47; 1 Corinthians 15:50; 1 Corinthians 15:58; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 1 Corinthians 16:11; 1 Corinthians 16:12; 1 Corinthians 16:15; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 1 Corinthians 16:22

## When to Keep Information Implicit

### Description

Sometimes it is better not to state assumed knowledge or implicit information explicitly. This page gives some direction about when not to do this.

This page answers the question: *When should I not make implicit information explicit?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

*Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information* ([UTA PDF](#))  
*Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit* ([UTA PDF](#))

### Translation Principles

- If a speaker or author intentionally left something unclear, do not try to make it more clear.
- If the original audience did not understand what the speaker meant, do not make it so clear that your readers would find it strange that the original audience did not understand.
- If you need to explicitly state some assumed knowledge or implicit information, try to do it in a way that does not make your readers think that the original audience needed to be told those things.
- Do not make implicit information explicit if it confuses the message or leads the reader to forget what the main point is.
- Do not make assumed knowledge or implicit information explicit if your readers already understand it.

### Examples From the Bible

From the eater came forth food; and from the strong one came forth sweetness. (Judges 14:14 ULT)

This was a riddle. Samson purposely said this in a way that it would be hard for his enemies to know what it meant. Do not make it clear that the eater and the strong thing was a lion and that the sweet thing to eat was honey.

Jesus said to them, "Take heed and beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees." They reasoned among themselves saying, "It is because we did not take bread." (Matthew 16:6-7 ULT)

Some possible implicit information here is that the disciples should beware of the false teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. But Jesus' disciples did not understand this. They thought that Jesus was talking about real yeast and bread. So it would not be appropriate to state explicitly that the word "yeast" here refers to false teaching. The disciples did not understand what Jesus meant until they heard what Jesus said in Matthew 16:11.

"How is it that you do not understand that I was not speaking to you about bread? Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Then they understood that he was not telling them to beware of yeast in bread, but to beware of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. (Matthew 16:11-12 ULT)

Only after Jesus explained that he was not talking about bread did they realize that he was talking about the false teaching of the Pharisees. Therefore, it would be wrong to explicitly state the implicit information in Matthew 16:6.

### Translation Strategies

Because we recommend that translators not change this kind of passage to make it more clear, this page does not have any translation strategies.

## Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

Because we recommend that translators not change this kind of passage to make it more clear, this page does not have any translation strategies applied.

"

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 10:28](#); [1 Corinthians 11:18](#); [1 Corinthians 11:23](#); [1 Corinthians 11:34](#); [1 Corinthians 12:2](#); [1 Corinthians 12:12](#); [1 Corinthians 14:27](#); [1 Corinthians 14:28](#); [1 Corinthians 14:34](#); [1 Corinthians 14:35](#); [1 Corinthians 15:3](#); [1 Corinthians 15:7](#); [1 Corinthians 15:21](#); [1 Corinthians 15:46](#); [1 Corinthians 16:11](#); [1 Corinthians 16:12](#)



# **unfoldingWord® Translation Words**

**Version 85**

# Adam

## Facts:

Adam was the first person whom God created. He and his wife Eve were made in the image of God.

- God formed Adam from dirt and breathed life into him.
- Adam's name sounds similar to the Hebrew word for "red dirt" or "ground."
- The name "Adam" is the same as the Old Testament word for "mankind" or "human being."
- All people are descendants of Adam and Eve.
- Adam and Eve disobeyed God. This separated them from God and caused sin and death to come into the world.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: death, [descendant](#), [Eve](#), [image of God](#), life)

## Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 2:14
- Genesis 3:17
- Genesis 5:1
- Genesis 11:5
- Luke 3:38
- Romans 5:15

## Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:9** Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image to be like us."
- **1:10** This man's name was **Adam**. God planted a garden where **Adam** could live, and put him there to care for it.
- **1:12** Then God said, "It is not good for man to be alone." But none of the animals could be **Adam's** helper.
- **2:11** And God clothed **Adam** and Eve with animal skins.
- **2:12** So God sent **Adam** and Eve away from the beautiful garden.
- **49:8** When **Adam** and Eve sinned, it affected all of their descendants.
- **50:16** Because **Adam** and Eve disobeyed God and brought sin into this world, God cursed it and decided to destroy it.

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H0120, G00760

"

Referenced in: [1 Corinthians 15 General Notes](#)

## 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

"

Referenced in: [1 Corinthians 11 General Notes](#)



## authority

### Definition:

The term “authority” usually refers to a position of influence, responsibility, or rule over another person.

- Kings and other governing rulers have authority over the people they are ruling.
- The word “authorities” can refer to people, governments, or organizations that have authority over others.
- The word “authorities” can also refer to spirit beings who have power over people who have not submitted themselves to God’s authority.
- Masters have authority over their servants or slaves. Parents have authority over their children.
- Governments have the authority or right to make laws that govern their citizens.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “authority” can also be translated as “control” or “right” or “qualifications.”
- Sometimes “authority” is used with the meaning of “power.”
- When “authorities” is used to refer to people or organizations who rule people, it could also be translated as “leaders” or “rulers” or “powers.”
- The phrase “by his own authority” could also be translated as “with his own right to lead” or “based on his own qualifications.”
- The expression, “under authority” could be translated as “responsible to obey” or “having to obey others’ commands.”

(See also: [dominion](#), [king](#), [ruler](#), power)

### Bible References:

- Colossians 2:10
- Esther 9:29
- Genesis 41:35
- Jonah 3:6-7
- Luke 12:5
- Luke 20:1-2
- Mark 1:22
- Matthew 8:9
- Matthew 28:19
- Titus 3:1

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H8633, G08310, G14130, G18490, G18500, G20030, G27150, G52470

”

Referenced in: [1 Corinthians 9 General Notes](#)

## discern, discernment, distinguish

### Definition:

The term “discern” means to be able to understand something, especially being able to know whether something is right or wrong.

- The term “discernment” refers to understanding and deciding wisely about a certain matter.
- It means to have wisdom and good judgment.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “discern” could also be translated as “understand” or “know the difference between” or “distinguish good and evil” or “judge rightly about” or “perceive right from wrong.”
- “Discernment” could be translated as “understanding” or “ability to distinguish good and evil.”

(See also: [judge](#), [wise](#))

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 3:7-9
- Genesis 41:33-34
- Proverbs 1:5
- Psalms 19:12

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0995, H2940, H4209, H5234, H8085, G03500, G12520, G12530, G29240

"

Referenced in: [1 Corinthians 4 General Notes](#)

## 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

"

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 8 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 10 General Notes](#)

## 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

"

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 2 General Notes](#)

## interpret, interpretation, interpreter

### Facts:

The terms “interpret” and “interpretation” refer to understanding and explaining the meaning of something that is not clear.

- Often in the Bible these terms are used in connection with explaining the meaning of dreams or visions.
- When the king of Babylon had some confusing dreams, God helped Daniel to interpret them and to explain their meanings.
- The “interpretation” of the dream is the “explanation” of the meaning of the dream.
- In the Old Testament, God sometimes used dreams to reveal to people what would happen in the future. So the interpretations of those dreams were prophecies.
- The term “interpret” can also refer to figuring out the meaning of other things, such as figuring out what the weather will be like based on how cold or hot it is, how windy it is, and what the sky looks like.
- Ways to translate the term “interpret” could include, “figure out the meaning of” or “explain” or “give the meaning of.”
- The term “interpretation” could also be translated as “explanation” or “meaning.”

(See also: [Babylon](#), [Daniel](#), [dream](#), [prophet](#), [vision](#))

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 12:10
- Daniel 4:4-6
- Genesis 40:4-5
- Judges 7:15-16
- Luke 12:56

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0995, H3887, H6591, H6622, H6623, H7667, H7760, H7922, G12520, G13280, G13290, G13810, G19550, G20580, G31770, G47930

"

Referenced in: [1 Corinthians 14 General Notes](#)

## judge, judgment

### Definition:

The terms “judge” and “judgment” often refer to making a decision about whether or not something is good, wise, or right. However, these terms can also refer to actions performed by a person as the result of a decision, usually in the context of deciding that something is bad, wrong, or evil.

- The terms “judge” and “judgment” can also mean “to cause harm to” (usually because God has decided a person or nation’s actions are wicked).
- The “judgment of God” often refers to his decision to condemn something or someone as sinful.
- God’s judgment usually includes punishing people for their sin.
- The term “judge” can also mean “condemn.” God instructs his people not to judge each other in this way.
- Another meaning is “arbitrate between” or “judge between,” as in deciding which person is right in a dispute between them.
- In some contexts, God’s “judgments” are what he has decided is right and just. They are similar to his decrees, laws, or precepts.
- “Judgment” can refer to wise decision-making ability. A person who lacks “judgment” does not have the wisdom to make wise decisions.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate to “judge” could include to “decide” or to “condemn” or to “punish” or to “decree.”
- The term “judgment” could be translated as “punishment” or “decision” or “verdict” or “decree” or “condemnation.”
- In some contexts, the phrase “in the judgment” could also be translated as “on judgment day” or “during the time when God judges people.”

(See also: [decree](#), [judge](#), [judgment day](#), [just](#), [law](#), [law](#))

### Bible References:

- 1 John 4:17
- 1 Kings 3:9
- Acts 10:42-43
- Isaiah 3:14
- James 2:4
- Luke 6:37
- Micah 3:9-11
- Psalm 54:1

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **19:16** The prophets warned the people that if they did not stop doing evil and start obeying God, then God would **judge** them as guilty, and he would punish them.
- **21:8** A king is someone who rules over a kingdom and **judges** the people. The Messiah would come would be the perfect king who would sit on the throne of his ancestor David. He would reign over the whole world forever, and who would always **judge** honestly and make the right decisions.
- **39:4** The high priest tore his clothes in anger and shouted to the other religious leaders, “We do not need any more witnesses! You have heard him say that he is the Son of God. What is your **judgment**?”



- **50:14** But God will **judge** everyone who does not believe in Jesus. He will throw them into hell, where they will weep and grind their teeth in anguish forever.

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H0148, H0430, H1777, H1778, H1779, H1780, H1781, H1782, H2940, H4055, H4941, H6414, H6415, H6416, H6417, H6419, H6485, H8196, H8199, H8201, G01440, G03500, G09680, G11060, G12520, G13410, G13450, G13480, G13490, G29170, G29190, G29200, G29220, G29230, G42320

"

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 5 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 6 General Notes](#)

## know, knew, knowledge, unknown, distinguish

### Definition:

Used in this sense the term “know” and “knowledge” mean generally to understand something. It can also mean to be aware of a fact. 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 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.”

### 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.”
- 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.”
- 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.
- Some languages have two different words for “know,” one for knowing facts and one for knowing a person and having a relationship with that person. The word for knowing facts should be used when translating this sense of the word “know.”

(See also: [know-relationship](#), [law](#), [reveal](#), [understand](#), [wise](#))

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

"

Referenced in: [1 Corinthians 8 General Notes](#)

## Lord's Supper

### Definition:

The term "Lord's Supper" was used by the apostle Paul to refer to the Passover meal that Jesus ate with his disciples on the night he was arrested by the Jewish leaders.

- During this meal, Jesus broke the Passover bread into pieces and called it his body, which would soon be beaten and killed.
- He called the cup of wine his blood, which would soon be spilled out as he died as a sacrifice for sin.
- Jesus commanded that as often as his followers shared this meal together, they should remember his death and resurrection.
- In his letter to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul also further established the Lord's Supper as a regular practice for believers in Jesus.
- Churches today often use the term "communion" to refer to the Lord's Supper. The term "Last Supper" is also sometimes used.

### Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated as "the Lord's meal" or "the meal of our Lord Jesus" or "the meal in memory of the Lord Jesus."

(See also: [Passover](#))

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 11:20
- 1 Corinthians 11:25-26

### Word Data:

- Strong's: G11730, G29600

"

Referenced in: [1 Corinthians 11 General Notes](#)

## 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

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Referenced in: [1 Corinthians 13 General Notes](#)

## member, body parts

### Definition:

The term “member” refers to one part of a complex body or group.

- The New Testament describes Christians as “members” of the body of Christ. Believers in Christ belong to a group that is made up of many members.
- Jesus Christ is the “head” of the body and individual believers function as the members of the body. The Holy Spirit gives each member of the body a special role to help the entire body to function well.
- Individuals who participate in groups such as the Jewish Council and the Pharisees are also called “members” of these groups.

(See also: body, [Pharisee](#), [council](#))

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 6:15
- 1 Corinthians 12:14-17
- Numbers 16:2
- Romans 12:5

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H1004, H1121, H3338, H5315, H8212, G10100, G31960, G36090

"

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 6 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 12 General Notes](#)

## 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

"

Referenced in: [1 Corinthians 14 General Notes](#)



## redeem, redeemer, redemption

### Definition:

The term “redeem” refers to buying back something or someone that has been previously owned or held captive. A “redeemer” is someone who redeems something or someone.

- God gave laws to the Israelites about how to redeem people or things. For example, someone could redeem a person who was in slavery by paying the price so that the slave could go free. The word “ransom” also refers to this practice.
- If someone’s land had been sold, a relative of that person could “redeem” or “buy back” that land so that it would stay in the family.
- These practices show how God redeems people who are in slavery to sin. When he died on the cross, Jesus paid the full price for people’s sins and redeemed all those who trust in him for salvation. People who have been redeemed by God are set free from sin and its punishment.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “redeem” could also be translated as “buy back” or “pay to free (someone)” or “ransom.”
- The term “redemption” could be translated as “ransom” or “freedom payment” or “buying back.”
- The words “ransom” and “redeem” have basically the same meaning, so some languages may have only one term to translate both these words. The word “ransom,” however, can also mean the payment necessary to “redeem” something or someone. The term “redeem” never refers to the actual payment itself.

(See also: [free](#), [ransom](#))

### Bible References:

- Colossians 1:13-14
- Ephesians 1:7-8
- Ephesians 5:16
- Galatians 3:13-14
- Galatians 4:5
- Luke 2:38
- Ruth 2:20

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1350, H1353, H6299, H6302, H6304, H6306, H6561, H7069, G00590, G06290, G18050, G30840, G30850

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**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 6 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 7 General Notes](#)

## 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

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**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 5 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 6 General Notes](#)

## spirit, wind, breath

### Definition:

The term “spirit” refers to the non-physical part of a person which cannot be seen. In biblical times, the concept of a person's spirit was closely related to the concept of a person's breath. The term can also refer to wind, that is, the movement of air in the natural world.

- The term “spirit” can refer to a being that does not have a physical body, such as an evil spirit.
- In general, the term “spiritual” describes things in the non-physical world.
- The term “spirit of” can also mean “having the characteristics of,” such as in “spirit of wisdom” or “in the spirit of Elijah.” Sometimes the Bible applies this term in the context of a person's attitude or emotional state, such as “spirit of fear” and “spirit of jealousy.”
- Jesus said that God is a spirit.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, some ways to translate “spirit” might include “non-physical being” or “inside part” or “inner being.”
- In some contexts, the term “spirit” could be translated as “evil spirit” or “evil spirit being.”
- Sometimes the term “spirit” is used to express the feelings of a person, as in “my spirit was grieved in my inmost being.” This could also be translated as “I felt grieved in my spirit” or “I felt deeply grieved.”
- The phrase “spirit of” could be translated as “character of” or “influence of” or “attitude of” or “thinking (that is) characterized by.”
- Depending on the context, “spiritual” could be translated as “non-physical” or “from the Holy Spirit” or “God's” or “part of the non-physical world.”
- The phrase “spiritual maturity” could be translated as “godly behavior that shows obedience to the Holy Spirit.”
- The term “spiritual gift” could be translated as “special ability that the Holy Spirit gives.”
- Sometimes this term can be translated as “wind” when referring to the simple movement of air or “breath” when referring to air movement caused by living beings.

(See also: [soul](#), [Holy Spirit](#), [demon](#), [breath](#))

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 5:5
- 1 John 4:3
- 1 Thessalonians 5:23
- Acts 5:9
- Colossians 1:9
- Ephesians 4:23
- Genesis 7:21-22
- Genesis 8:1
- Isaiah 4:4
- Mark 1:23-26
- Matthew 26:41
- Philippians 1:27

## Examples from the Bible stories:

- **13:3** Three days later, after the people had prepared themselves **spiritually**, God came down on top of Mount Sinai with thunder, lightning, smoke, and a loud trumpet blast.
- **40:7** Then Jesus cried out, "It is finished! Father, I give my **spirit** into your hands." Then he bowed his head and gave up his **spirit**.
- **45:5** As Stephen was dying, he cried out, "Jesus, receive my **spirit**."
- **48:7** All the people groups are blessed through him, because everyone who believes in Jesus is saved from sin, and becomes a **spiritual** descendant of Abraham.

## Word Data:

- Strong's: H0178, H1172, H5397, H7307, H7308, G41510, G41520, G41530, G53260, G54270

"

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 5 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 10 General Notes](#)

## tongue, language

### Definition:

The term “tongue” refers to the organ inside a person’s mouth that is used to speak. The term is often used figuratively to mean “language” or “speaking.” There also several other figurative meanings as well.

- In the Bible, the most common figurative meaning for this term is “language” or “speech.”
- Sometimes “tongue” may refer to a human language spoken by a certain people group.
- Other times it refers to a supernatural language that the Holy Spirit gives believers in Christ as one of the “gifts of the Spirit.”
- In the book of Acts, the expression “tongues” of fire refers to “flames” of fire, presumably shaped like tongues.

### Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, the term “tongue” can be translated as “language” or “supernatural language.” If it is not clear which one it is referring to, it is better to translate it as “language.”
- When referring to fire, this term could be translated as “flames.”
- The expression “my tongue rejoices” could be translated as “I rejoice and praise God” or “I am joyfully praising God.”
- The phrase, “tongue that lies” could be translated as “person who tell lies” or “people who lie.”
- Phrases such as “with their tongues” could be translated as “with what they say” or “by their words.”

(See also: gift, [Holy Spirit](#), [joy](#), [praise](#), [rejoice](#), [spirit](#))

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 12:10
- 1 John 3:18
- 2 Samuel 23:2
- Acts 2:26
- Ezekiel 36:3
- Philippians 2:11

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3956, G11000, G12580, G20840

”

**Referenced in:** [1 Corinthians 12 General Notes](#); [1 Corinthians 14 General Notes](#)

# trouble, disturb, stir up, distress, hardship, calamity

## Definition:

A “trouble” is an experience in life that is very difficult and distressing. To “trouble” someone means to “bother” that person or to cause him distress. To be “troubled” means to feel upset or distressed about something.

- Troubles can be physical, emotional, or spiritual things that hurt a person.
- In the Bible, often troubles are times of testing that God uses to help believers mature and grow in their faith.
- The Old Testament use of “trouble” also referred to judgment that came on people groups who were immoral and rejected God.

## Translation Suggestions

- The term “trouble” or “troubles” could also be translated as “danger” or “painful things that happen” or “persecution” or “difficult experiences” or “distress.”
- The term “troubled” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “undergoing distress” or “feeling terrible distress” or “worried” or “anxious” or “distressed” or “terrified” or “disturbed.”
- “Don’t trouble her” could also be translated as “don’t bother her” or “don’t criticize her.”
- The phrase “day of trouble” or “times of trouble” could also be translated as “when you experience distress” or “when difficult things happen to you” or “when God causes distressing things to happen.”
- Ways to translate “make trouble” or “bring trouble” could include “cause distressing things to happen” or “cause difficulties” or “make them experience very difficult things.”

(See also: [afflict](#), [persecute](#))

## Bible References:

- 1 Kings 18:18-19
- 2 Chronicles 25:19
- Luke 24:38
- Matthew 24:6
- Matthew 26:36-38

## Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0205, H0926, H0927, H1204, H1607, H1644, H1804, H2000, H4103, H5916, H5999, H6031, H6040, H6470, H6696, H6862, H6869, H6887, H7264, H7267, H7451, H7489, H8513, G03870, G16130, G17760, G23460, G23470, G23500, G23600, G28730, G36360, G39260, G39300, G39860, G44230, G46600, G50150, G51820

”

Referenced in: [1 Corinthians 7 General Notes](#)

## 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

"

Referenced in: [1 Corinthians 14 General Notes](#)

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