

unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

v92

1 John

unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

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unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

1 John

1 John Introduction

Introduction to 1 John

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of 1 John

This is a letter that the apostle John wrote to challenge and correct false teachings that were leading followers of Jesus to believe wrong things and live in wrong ways. John used the normal letter form of that time, which had distinct opening and closing sections with the main body of the letter in between them.

1. Opening of Letter (1:1–4)
2. Main Body of Letter (1:5–5:12)
    - Genuine believers obey God and love one another (1:5–2:17)
    - It is false teaching to deny that Jesus is the Messiah (2:18–2:27)
    - Genuine children of God do not sin (2:28–3:10)
    - Genuine believers help one another sacrificially (3:11–18)
    - Genuine believers have confidence in prayer (3:19–24)
    - It is false teaching to deny that Jesus became human (4:1–6)
    - Genuine believers love one another as God has loved them (4:7–21)
    - It is false teaching to deny that Jesus is the Son of God (5:1–12)
3. Closing of Letter (5:13–21)

Who wrote the book of 1 John?

The author of this letter does not give his name. However, since early Christian times, the church has widely considered the apostle John to be the author. He wrote the Gospel of John, and there are many similarities between the content of that book and this letter. If John did write this letter, he probably did so near the end of his life.

To whom was the book of 1 John written?

The author wrote this letter to people whom he addresses as "beloved" and as "my little children." This probably refers to believers in various churches located in the area where John was then living.

What is the book of 1 John about?

False teachers were encouraging followers of Jesus to believe wrong things and to live in wrong ways. John wanted to challenge and correct those false teachings so that the people who received his letter would continue to believe the truth that they had been taught and live in right ways. The false teachers were saying that these people were not saved; John wanted to assure them that they were saved.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "1 John" or "First John." They may also choose a different title, such as "The First Letter from John" or "The First Letter John Wrote." (See: How to Translate Names)

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Who were the people against whom John spoke?

The false teachers whom John was challenging seem to have held beliefs similar to what would later become known as Gnosticism. Those false teachers believed that the physical world was evil. They thought that God would not become human, since they considered the physical body to be evil, so they denied that in the person of Jesus, God had come to earth in human form. (See: evil, wicked, wickedness, unpleasant)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

"sin"

In chapter 1, John says that we should not deny that we sin. Rather, if we confess our sin, God will forgive us. In chapter 2, John says that he is writing this letter so that the recipients will not sin, but he adds that if they do sin, Jesus will advocate on their behalf. But in chapter 3, John says that everyone who has been begotten from God and who remains in God does not commit sin and is not able to sin. And in chapter 5, John says that we should not pray for people who are sinning in certain ways, although we should pray for people who are sinning in other ways. These ideas may seem confusing and contradictory.

However, the explanation is that the people whose teachings John challenged and corrected in this letter were saying that it did not matter what people did in their bodies. This was because they thought that physical matter was evil, and so they thought that God did not care about it. In effect, they were saying that there was no such thing as sin. So John needed to say, in chapter 1, that sin is real and that everyone sins and that God does care about that. So when believers sin they need to confess it and for God to forgive them. Some of the believers may have been deceived by the false teaching and may have begun living sinfully again, so John also needed to reassure them that if they repented and confessed their sins, God would forgive them. John says similar things in chapter 2. Then in chapter 3 he explains that the new nature that believers have as children of God is one that rejects sin. A believer does not want to sin

and does not enjoy sinning. They should recognize that those who excuse or condone sin are not truly children of God, and that as children of God themselves, God helps them to become more and more obedient and free from sin. Finally, in chapter 5, John warns that if a person sins wantonly and continually, this likely means that they have rejected Jesus and are not influenced by the Holy Spirit. He says that, in that case, it may not be effective to pray for them. But he then encourages his readers that if a person sins occasionally but feels remorse, he is influenced by the Spirit, and so the prayers of other believers will help him to repent and to live in a right way again. (See: sin, sinful, sinner, sinning; and faith; and forgive, forgiven, forgiveness, pardon, pardoned)

"remain"

In this letter, John often uses the word "remain" (which could also be translated as "reside" or "abide") as a spatial metaphor. John speaks of a believer becoming more faithful to Jesus and knowing Jesus better as if the teaching of Jesus "remained" in the believer. He speaks of a person being spiritually joined to someone else as if that person "remained" in the other person: He writes that Christians "remain" in Christ and in God, and he says that the Father "remains" in the Son, the Son "remains" in the Father, the Son "remains" in believers, and the Holy Spirit "remains" in believers.

Translators may find it difficult to represent these ideas in their own languages if they try to use exactly the same words and expressions each time. For example, in 2:6, when John speaks of a believer "remaining" in God, he intends to express the idea of that believer being spiritually unified with God. Accordingly, the UST speaks of how the believer "shares life with God." To give another example, for the statement in 2:14 that "the word of God remains in you," the UST says, "you continue to obey what God commands." This shows how other expressions can be found that accurately communicate the various ideas that John is expressing through the term "remain."

"appear"

In several places in this letter, John uses a term that the ULT usually translates as "appear." This is actually a passive verbal form in Greek, but as is often the case with such forms in that language, it can have an active meaning. When it has an active meaning, it is important to recognize that it does not simply mean "seemed to be there," as the word "appeared" might suggest. Rather, it means "came to be there." This is illustrated well by the use of the term in another New Testament book, 2 Corinthians, in which Paul writes in 5:10 that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." Clearly this does not mean that we must only seem to be present there. Rather, we must actually arrive there.

Throughout the letter, it is a subtle matter of interpretation to decide whether John is using the term "appear" in an active sense or in a passive sense. For example, in 1:2, John applies the term twice to the "Word of life," that is, to Jesus. But it is not clear whether he is saying that Jesus himself "appeared," that is, he came to earth, or that he "was made apparent" (made visible), with the emphasis on the idea that God revealed Jesus to the world and in the process revealed himself to the world through Jesus. At each place where John uses this term, notes will call attention to it and discuss what it likely means in that context.

"the world"

John also uses the term "world" in a variety of senses in this letter. It can mean the earth, something material, the people who live in the world, the people who do not honor God, or the

values of the people who do not honor God. Notes will address the meaning of the term "world" in each instance where John uses it.

"to know"

The verb "to know" is used in two different ways in this letter. Sometimes it is used about knowing a fact, as in 3:2, 3:5, and 3:19. Sometimes it means to experience and understand someone or something, as in 3:1, 3:6, 3:16, and 3:20. Sometimes John uses it in two different senses in the same sentence, as in 2:3, "in this we know that we have known him." Your language may have different words for these different meanings. If so, you must be careful to use the appropriate word in the right place in your translation.

"We"

In most cases in this letter, the first-person plural pronouns ("we, our," etc.) are inclusive, and so if your language marks that distinction, use the inclusive form in your translation. In those cases, John is speaking of what both he and the recipients know, or of things that are true of both him and the recipients. However, in a few cases, the first-person pronouns are exclusive, since John is telling the recipients what he and his fellow apostles saw and heard from Jesus. The notes will identify all such places, and in them you should use the exclusive forms if your language marks that distinction. (See: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We')

"You, your"

The words "you" and "your" in this letter are plural.

Light and darkness

In 1:5–7 and 2:8–11 John uses an extended metaphor in which light represents what is good or holy and darkness represents what is evil. If this is not easily understood in your language, you may need to say explicitly that light represents goodness or that light is like goodness, or you may choose to talk about goodness without using the symbol of light. There will be a note explaining the metaphor in each place. (See: Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors)

Major textual issues in the book of 1 John

When ancient manuscripts of the Bible differ, the ULT puts the reading that scholars consider to be the most accurate in its text, but it puts other possibly accurate readings in footnotes. The introductions to each chapter will discuss places where the ancient manuscripts differ in significant ways, and notes will address those places again where they occur in the book. If a translation of the Bible already exists in your region, consider using the readings found in that version. If not, we recommend that you follow the readings in the ULT text. (See: Textual Variants)

1 John 1

1 John 1 Introduction

1 John 1 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

1. Opening of the letter (1:1–4)
2. Genuine believers obey God and love one another (1:5–10, continues through 2:17)

Translation Issues in This Chapter

The Word of Life

John uses the phrase “the Word of life” to refer to Jesus in 1:1. “The Word” is a title that John uses for Jesus. If you have translated the beginning of the Gospel of John, see how you translated it there. This title does not refer to a word that is spoken by someone. By using this title for Jesus, John is saying that Jesus is God’s most important message to all people. Jesus is the one who reveals who God is. In your translation of this title, try to make it clear that this is the title of a person whose role it is to communicate a message. Something like “The Message” or “The Revealer” might be appropriate. Consider also the title that is used in an accepted translation in your area. Here, John connects the title “the Word” with the phrase “of life.” By this, John probably means that Jesus reveals God to the world and that Jesus also is the source of life. A translation of this entire phrase could be something like, “Jesus, the Message of God who gives life.” (See: word of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, word of truth, scripture)

Order of Information

Like many Greek compositions of this time, for stylistic purposes, this letter begins with a very long sentence. It goes from the beginning of 1:1 to the middle of 1:3. The parts of this sentence may not be in the order that is customary in many languages. The direct object comes first, and it is very long, made up of many different clauses. The subject and verb do not come until near the end. And in the middle, there is a long digression. So think about the best way to translate and arrange the parts of this sentence in your language.

One approach that might work well in your language would be to create a verse bridge that includes all of 1:1–3. You could break up this long sentence into several smaller sentences, repeating the subject and verb for clarity. This would allow you to present the parts of the sentence in an order that might be more customary in your language and that your readers might understand better. Here is an example of 1 John 1:1–3 rearranged into an order that might be clearer in your language:

“We want you to have fellowship with us, and also with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. Therefore, we are declaring to you what we have seen and heard. We are declaring to you what was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched. It has to do with the Word of life.

Indeed, the life appeared, and we have seen it, and we are testifying to it. Yes, we are announcing to you the eternal life that was with the Father and that then came to us."

If you take this approach, another way to translate a combination of the second and third sentences would be, "So we are declaring to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and what our hands have touched."

Another approach that could also work well and which would not require a verse bridge would be to leave the phrases in their present order, but to divide the sentence into three parts at the verse divisions. If you do that, you could also put your translation of the phrase "regarding the Word of life" at the beginning rather than the end of 1:1 and present it as a topical introduction to the letter. Otherwise, your readers might not get the sense that this is a letter until they reached 1:4, where John formally states his purpose for writing. An example of 1 John 1:1–3 in this order would be:

"1 This is about the Word of life. This Word was from the beginning. We have heard him, we have seen him with our eyes, we have looked at him and our hands have touched him. 2 Indeed, this one who is life appeared, and we have seen him, and we are testifying about him. Yes, we are announcing to you the eternal life that was with the Father and that then came to us. 3 We are declaring to you what we have seen and heard so that you will have fellowship with us, and this fellowship is also with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ."

The notes to 1:1–4 provide further specific suggestions for how to translate this long opening sentence. (See: Verse Bridges)

Textual Issues in This Chapter

In 1:4, the most accurate ancient manuscripts read "so that our joy may be fulfilled." The ULT follows that reading. However, some other ancient manuscripts read, "your joy" instead of "our joy." If a translation of the Bible already exists in your region, consider using whichever reading is found in that version. If a translation does not already exist, we recommend that you follow the reading in the ULT text. (See: Textual Variants)

1 John 1:1

ULT	UST
What was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched, regarding the Word of life—	*I, John, am writing to you about Jesus, the Word of God, the one who gives life. He existed before there was anything else. We apostles listened to him as he taught people. We saw him personally. We looked at him and touched him. So we can testify that he was a real human being.*

ULT **What was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched, regarding the Word of life**
UST I, John, am writing to you about {Jesus,} the Word {of God}, the one who gives life. He existed before there was anything else. We {apostles} listened to him {as he taught people}. We saw him personally. We looked at him and touched him. So we can testify that he was a real human being

See the discussion in the introduction to this chapter for how to translate the long sentence in 1:1–3. If you follow the suggestion to translate the phrase **regarding the Word of life** as a topical introduction to this letter, you will already have indicated that the four clauses in this verse refer to a person, Jesus. If you have pronouns in your language that refer to people, such as "he," "who," and "whom," it would be appropriate to use them here. Alternate translation: [Regarding the Word of life—he is the one who has existed from all eternity, whom we heard speak, whom we saw with our own eyes, and whom we looked at and touched with our own hands]

Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **from the beginning**
UST before there was anything else

John uses the phrase **from the beginning** in various ways in this letter. Here it refers to the fact that Jesus has always existed. Alternate translation: [from all eternity]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **we have heard … we have seen … our … we have looked at … our**
UST We {apostles} listened to … as he taught people. We saw … personally. We looked at … touched … So we can testify that he was a real human being

Here the pronouns **we** and **our** are exclusive, since John is speaking on behalf of himself and the other eyewitnesses to the earthly life of Jesus, but the people to whom he is writing did not see Jesus. So use exclusive forms here if your language marks that distinction.

Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

ULT **which we have heard**
UST We {apostles} listened to him as he taught people

The implication is that what John and the other eyewitnesses **heard** was Jesus speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could include this information, as in the UST. Alternate translation: [whom we heard speak]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at**
UST We saw him personally. We looked at him … him

These two phrases mean the same thing. John is likely using repetition for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases and show the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [whom we saw clearly ourselves]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **which we have seen with our eyes**
UST We saw him personally

In your language, it might seem that this phrase expresses unnecessary extra information. If so, you could abbreviate it. However, your language may have its own way of using such extra information for emphasis, and you could also do that in your translation. Alternate translation: [whom we saw] or [whom we saw with our own eyes]
Support Reference: Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

ULT **our hands have touched**
UST touched … So we can testify that he was a real human being

In your language, it might seem that this phrase expresses unnecessary extra information. If so, you could abbreviate it. However, your language may have its own way of using such extra information for emphasis, and you could also do that in your translation. Alternate translation: [whom we touched] or [whom we touched with our own hands]
Support Reference: Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

ULT **we have seen with our eyes … our hands have touched**
UST We saw … personally … touched … So we can testify that he was a real human being

The false teachers were denying that Jesus was a real human being and saying that he was only a spirit. But the implications of what John is saying here are that Jesus was a real human being. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers.
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **regarding the Word of life**
UST I, John, am writing to you about {Jesus,} the Word {of God}, the one who gives life

As the introduction to this chapter suggests, you could put your translation of this phrase, **regarding the Word of life**, at the beginning of this verse and present it as a sentence of its own as a topical introduction to the letter, as UST does. Alternate translation: [This is about Jesus, the Word of life]
Support Reference: Information Structure

ULT **regarding the Word of life**
UST I, John, am writing to you about {Jesus,} the Word {of God}, the one who gives life

Letter writers of this time typically began by giving their own names. That is the case for most of the letters in the New Testament. This letter is an exception, but if it would be helpful to your readers, you could supply John's name here, as UST does. As noted above, John uses the plural pronoun "we" because he is speaking on behalf of himself and the other eyewitnesses to Jesus' earthly life. But it may be more natural in your language for him to refer to himself with a singular pronoun, and if so, you could also do that in your translation, as in the UST. Alternate translation: [This is John, writing to you about Jesus, the Word of life]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

> ULT **the Word of life**
> UST Jesus, the Word {of God}, the one who gives life

Here, **the Word of life** is implicitly a description of Jesus. As the General Introduction explains, there are many similarities between this letter and the Gospel of John. That gospel begins by saying about Jesus, “In the beginning was the Word.” So when John speaks in this letter of **the Word of life** that **was from the beginning**, he is also speaking about Jesus. ULT indicates this by capitalizing **Word** to indicate that this is a title for Jesus. Alternate translation: [Jesus, the Word of God, who gives life]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

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> ULT **of life**
> UST the one who gives life

This could be referring either to the **life** that Jesus has or to the life that Jesus gives. But since John is writing this letter to reassure believers, it seems more likely that this expression is referring to the **life** that “the Word” (Jesus) gives to those who believe. Alternate translation: [who gives life to everyone who believes in him]

Support Reference: Possession

> ULT **of life**
> UST the one who gives life

In this letter, John uses **life** in different ways, either to refer literally to physical life or to spiritual life. Here the reference is to spiritual life. Alternate translation: [of spiritual life]

Support Reference: Metaphor

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1 John 1:2

ULT	UST
indeed, the life appeared, and we have seen it, and we are testifying to it, and we are announcing to you the eternal life that was with the Father and appeared to us—	*Because he who always lives came here to the earth and we saw him, we are proclaiming him to you clearly. The one who has always existed, who had been with his Father in heaven, came here to us.*

ULT **indeed, the life appeared**

UST Because he who always lives came here to the earth

See the discussion of the term "appear" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. Here the term could mean one of two things: (1) John could be emphasizing how Jesus came to this earth, as modelled by the UST. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: [Indeed, the life came right here]; or (2) John could be emphasizing how God revealed Jesus to the world and thereby revealed himself to the world through Jesus. To bring out that emphasis, you could translate this with a passive verbal form or, if your language does not use passive forms, you can use an active form and say who did the action. Alternate translation: [Indeed, the life was made visible] or [Indeed, God made the life visible]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **the life**

UST he who always lives

John is speaking of Jesus, whom he calls the "Word of life" in the previous verse, by referring to **the life** that is associated with him. In this case it seems to describe the **life** that Jesus embodies rather than the **life** that he gives. Alternate translation: [Jesus] or [Jesus, who is life]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **we have seen it … we are testifying to it … we are announcing … to us**

UST we saw him, we are proclaiming him … clearly … to us

John is speaking on behalf of himself and the other eyewitnesses to the earthly life of Jesus, so the pronouns **we** and **us** are exclusive in this verse.

Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

ULT **to you**

UST to you

As the General Introduction explains, John is writing this letter to believers in various churches, and so the pronouns **you**, "your," and "yourselves" are plural throughout the entire letter.

Support Reference: Forms of You

ULT **we have seen {it}, and we are testifying to it**

UST we saw him, we are proclaiming him … clearly

If you decided to use personal pronouns in 1:1, you could use them in these cases as well. Alternate translation: [we have seen him, and we are testifying that we saw him]

Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **we are testifying {to it}, and we are announcing to you**
UST we are proclaiming him to you clearly

These two phrases mean similar things. John is likely using repetition for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases and express the emphasis in another way, as UST does. Alternate translation: [we are enthusiastically telling you about]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **the eternal life**
UST The one who has always existed

As earlier in the verse, John is speaking of Jesus by referring to the **life** that is associated with him. Alternate translation: [Jesus, the eternal life] or [Jesus, the one who has always been alive,]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the Father**
UST his Father in heaven

The title **the Father** is an important title for God. Alternate translation: [God the Father]
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **and appeared to us**
UST came here to us

See how you translated **appeared** earlier in this verse. Alternate translation: [and came right to us] or [and was made visible to us] or [and whom God made visible to us]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
testifying	we are proclaiming him … clearly
announcing	proclaiming
eternal	who … always
Father	Father

1 John 1:3

ULT	UST
what we have seen and heard, we declare also to you, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And indeed, our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.	*We want you to share life with us, and so we are proclaiming to you what we saw Jesus do and what we heard Jesus say. If you believe in him, you will share life, as we do, with God our Father and with his Son Jesus the Messiah.*

ULT **what we have seen and heard, we declare also to you, so that you also may have fellowship with us**

UST We want you to share life with us, and so we are proclaiming to you what we saw {Jesus do} and what we heard Jesus say

If it would be helpful in your language, you could rearrange the parts of this section. You could move the clause beginning with **so that you also** to the beginning of the verse, since that clause gives the reason for the action that the rest of the verse describes. As the introduction to this chapter suggests, it may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: [So that you also may have fellowship with us, we are declaring to you what we have seen and heard]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **what we have seen and heard**

UST what we saw {Jesus do} and what we heard Jesus say

John is referring implicitly to the way that he and the other eyewitnesses had **seen and heard** Jesus when he was alive on earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could include this information, as in the UST. Alternate translation: [what we saw and heard from Jesus when he was alive on earth]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **we have seen and heard, we declare … us**

UST us … we are proclaiming … we saw {Jesus do} and … we heard Jesus say

John is speaking on behalf of himself and the other eyewitnesses to the earthly life of Jesus, so the pronouns **we** and **us** are exclusive.

Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’

ULT **you also may have fellowship with us … our fellowship {is} with the Father and with his Son**

UST We want you to share life with us … you will share life, as we do, with God our Father and with his Son

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **fellowship**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [so that you could be close friends with us … we are all close friends with God the Father and with his Son]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **our fellowship {is} with**
UST you will share life, as we do, with

The word **our** here is likely inclusive, since John is writing to fellow believers. So if your language marks that distinction, you should translate the term as inclusive. Even if your language does not mark that distinction, you can indicate in your translation that the term applies both to John and to the people to whom he is writing. Alternate translation: [we are all close friends with]

Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

ULT **the Father … his Son**
UST God our Father … his Son

Father and **Son** are important titles. Alternate translation: [God the Father … his Son]

Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
declare	proclaiming
fellowship	to share life
fellowship	you will share life
Father	Father
Son	Son
Jesus	Jesus
Christ	Messiah

1 John 1:4

ULT	UST
And we are writing these things so that our joy may be fulfilled.	*I am writing to you about these things so that you will recognize that they are true, and that as a result we will be completely joyful together.*

ULT **we are writing these things**
UST I am writing to you about these things

As the introduction to this chapter explains, here John is formally stating his purpose for writing. If you decided in 1:1 that it would be more natural in your language for him to refer to himself with a singular pronoun in such a context, you could do the same thing here. Alternate translation: [I, John, am writing these things]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **we … our**
UST I … we … together

If you use the plural pronoun **we** here, it would be exclusive, since John is speaking of himself and the other eyewitnesses on whose behalf he is writing. However, the term **our** in the second clause is likely inclusive, since John probably means that he wants both himself and his readers to have **joy** in the shared fellowship with one another and with the Father and the Son whom he describes in the previous verse.
Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

ULT **our joy**
UST we … joyful together

See the discussion of textual issues at the end of the introduction to this chapter to decide whether to follow the reading of ULT and say **our joy** or to follow the reading of some other versions and say "your joy."
Support Reference: Textual Variants

ULT **our joy**
UST we … joyful together

If you follow the variant reading "your joy" here instead of **our joy**, the word "your" would be plural, as in the rest of this letter, since it would refer to a group of believers.
Support Reference: Forms of You

ULT **so that our joy may be fulfilled**
UST so that {you will recognize that they are true, and that as a result} we will be completely joyful together

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **joy**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [so that we will be completely happy]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

> ULT **so that our joy may be fulfilled**
> UST so that {you will recognize that they are true, and that as a result} we will be completely joyful together

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [so that we will be completely happy]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

> ULT **so that our joy may be fulfilled**
> UST so that {you will recognize that they are true, and that as a result} we will be completely joyful together

The implications are that John and his readers will be completely happy together if his readers recognize the truth of what he is writing to them about. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly, as UST does.

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

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TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
joy	joyful

1 John 1:5

ULT	UST
And this is the message that we have heard from him and are announcing to you, that God is light, and darkness is not in him at all.	*The message that we heard from Jesus and are proclaiming to you is this: God always does what is right, and he never, ever does anything wrong. He is like a pure light in which there is no darkness at all.*

ULT **we have heard**
UST we heard

The pronoun **we** is exclusive, since John is speaking on behalf of himself and the other eyewitnesses to the earthly life of Jesus.
Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

ULT **from him**
UST from Jesus

The pronoun **him** in this first instance in the verse refers to Jesus, since John is speaking of the message that he and the other eyewitnesses heard from Jesus. Alternate translation: [from Jesus]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **God is light, and darkness is not in him at all**
UST God always does what is right, and he never, ever does anything wrong. He is like a pure light in which there is no darkness at all

These two phrases mean similar things. John is likely using repetition for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [God is entirely light] or, if you represent these metaphors plainly (See next two notes), [God is completely holy]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **God is light**
UST God always does what is right … He is like a pure light

John often uses **light** in this letter to mean what is holy, right, and good. Here, in reference to God, it indicates holiness. Alternate translation: [God is holy]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **darkness is not in him at all**
UST he never, ever does anything wrong … in which there is no darkness at all

John often uses the word **darkness** in this letter to mean what is evil. Alternate translation: [God is not evil at all]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **darkness is not in him at all**

UST he never, ever does anything wrong … in which there is no darkness at all

John is using a double negative in Greek for emphasis. In English it would translate as "darkness is not in him not at all." In Greek, the second negative does not cancel the first negative to create a positive meaning. In English, the meaning would inaccurately be positive, which is why ULT uses only one negative and says "darkness is not in him at all." But if your language uses double negatives for emphasis that do not cancel one another, it would be appropriate to use that construction in your translation.

Support Reference: Double Negatives

ULT **in him**

UST he … does anything wrong … in which there is … darkness

In this second instance in the verse, the pronoun **him** refers to God. Alternate translation: [in God]

Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
announcing	proclaiming
God	God

1 John 1:6

ULT	UST
If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we are lying and we are not doing the truth.	*If we say that we share life with God, but we live in an evil manner, we are lying. We are not living truthfully. It is as though we are living in the dark.*

ULT **If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we are lying and we are not doing the truth**
UST If we say that we share life with God, but we live in an evil manner, we are lying. We are not living truthfully. It is as though we are living in the dark

John is using a hypothetical situation to help his readers recognize the importance of consistency between their words and their actions. Alternate translation: [Suppose we say that we have fellowship with him, but we walk in darkness. Then we are lying and are not doing the truth]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **If we say that we have fellowship with him**
UST If we say that we share life with God

If your language does not use an abstract noun for **fellowship**, see how you expressed this idea in 1:3. Alternate translation: [If we say that we are close friends with God]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **with him**
UST with God

Here, **him** refers back to "God" in the previous verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could repeat the word "God" here. Alternate translation: [with God]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and**
UST but

John is using the word **and** here to introduce the contrast of a person claiming to have fellowship with God and behaving differently than that. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [but]
Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **walk in the darkness**
UST we live in an evil manner … It is as though we are living in the dark

John is using the word **walk** to mean how a person lives and behaves. Alternate translation: [do what is evil]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **walk in the darkness**
UST we live in an evil manner … It is as though we are living in the dark

As in 1:5, John is using the word **darkness** to mean evil. Alternate translation: [do what is evil]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **we are lying and we are not doing the truth**
UST we are lying. We are not living truthfully

These two phrases mean similar things. It is likely that John is using repetition for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [we are really not truthful at all]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **we are not doing the truth**
UST We are not living truthfully

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **truth**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [we are not living according to God's true message]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
fellowship	we share life

1 John 1:7

ULT	UST
But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.	*But if we live in a pure manner, as God is pure in every way, then we can share life with each other. This is like living in God's pure light. Then God forgives all of our sin and accepts us because his Son Jesus died for us.*

ULT **But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another**
UST But if we live in a pure manner, as God is pure in every way, then we can share life with each other. This is like living in God's pure light

John is using another hypothetical situation to help his readers recognize the value and benefits of living a life that is holy, as God is holy. Alternate translation: [But suppose we walk in the light as he is in the light. Then we have fellowship with one another]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **we walk in the light**
UST we live in a pure manner … This is like living

John is using the word **walk** to mean how a person lives and behaves. Alternate translation: [we do what is right]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **we walk in the light**
UST we live in a pure manner … This is like living

As in 1:5, John is using the word **light** to mean what is holy, right, and good. Alternate translation: [we do what is holy] or [we do what is right]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **as he is in the light**
UST as God is pure in every way … in God's pure light

Here the pronoun **he** refers to God. Alternate translation: [as God is in the light]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **as he is in the light**
UST as God is pure in every way … in God's pure light

John is using the word **light** here to refer to God's holiness. Alternate translation: [as God is holy]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **we have fellowship with one another**
UST then we can share life with each other

If your language does not use an abstract noun for **fellowship**, see how you expressed this idea in 1:3. Alternate translation: [then we are close friends with one another]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the blood of Jesus**
UST because … Jesus died for us

John is using the word **blood** here to refer to the sacrificial death of Jesus by association with the **blood** that Jesus shed when he died for our sins. Alternate translation: [the sacrificial death of Jesus]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **of Jesus his Son**
UST his Son Jesus

Son is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **cleanses us from all sin**
UST God forgives all of our sin and accepts us

John is speaking of **sin** as if it made a person dirty and of the **blood** of Jesus as if it made a person clean. Alternate translation: [takes away all of our sin]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
fellowship	then we can share life
Jesus	Jesus
Son	Son
sin	sin

1 John 1:8

ULT	UST
If we say that we have no sin, we are leading ourselves astray, and the truth is not in us.	*If we say that we do not commit sin, we are fooling ourselves. We are refusing to believe the true things that God says about us.*

ULT **If we say that we have no sin, we are leading ourselves astray, and the truth is not in us**

UST If we say that we do not commit sin, we are fooling ourselves. We are refusing to believe the true things that God says about us

John is using another hypothetical situation to help his readers recognize the importance of consistency between their words and their actions. Alternate translation: [Suppose we say that we have no sin. Then we are leading ourselves astray, and the truth is not in us]

Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **we are leading ourselves astray**

UST we are fooling ourselves

John speaks of those who say this as if they were guides who were leading people—themselves, actually—in the wrong direction. Alternate translation: [we are deceiving ourselves]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the truth is not in us**

UST We are refusing to believe the true things that God says about us

John speaks of the **truth** as if it were an object that could be inside believers. Alternate translation: [we do not believe that what God says is true]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the truth is not in us**

UST We are refusing to believe the true things that God says about us

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **truth**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [we do not believe that what God says is true]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
sin	sin
we are leading … astray	we are fooling

1 John 1:9

ULT	UST
If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous, that he should forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.	*But God always does what he says he will do, and what he does is always right. So if we admit to him that we have sinned and reject that sin, he will forgive us for our sins and he will free us from the guilt of everything that we have done wrong.*

ULT **If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous**
UST But God always does what he says he will do, and what he does is always right … if we admit to him that we have sinned and reject that sin

John is using another hypothetical situation to help his readers recognize the value and benefits of living in holiness. Alternate translation: [Suppose we confess our sins. Then he is faithful and righteous]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **If we confess our sins**
UST if we admit to him that we have sinned and reject that sin

Part of confessing sin to God is rejecting them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [If we confess our sins to God and turn away from them]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **he is faithful … that he should forgive**
UST But God always does what he says he will do … So … he will forgive

The pronoun **he** refers to God in both instances in this verse. Alternate translation: [God is faithful … and God will forgive]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **that he should forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness**
UST So … he will forgive us for our sins and he will free us from {the guilt of} everything that we have done wrong

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. John is likely using them together for emphasis. If it would be helpful to for your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [and he will completely forgive us of what we have done wrong]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **he should forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness**
UST he will forgive us for our sins and he will free us from {the guilt of} everything that we have done wrong

As in 1:7, John is speaking figuratively as if **sins** made a person physically dirty and of God's forgiveness as if it made a person physically clean. Alternate translation: [he should not hold against us anything that we have done wrong]
Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **all unrighteousness**
> UST the guilt of everything that we have done wrong

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **unrighteousness** with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [anything that we have done wrong]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
confess	we admit to him … and reject
sins	sin
faithful	But God always does what he says he will do
righteous	what he does is always right
forgive	forgive
sins	sins
unrighteousness	the guilt of … that we have done wrong

1 John 1:10

ULT	UST
If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.	*Because God says that everyone has sinned, if we say that we have not sinned, we are speaking as if God were a liar! We are rejecting what God has said about us!*

ULT **If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar**
UST Because God says that everyone has sinned, if we say that we have not sinned, we are speaking as if God were a liar

John is using another hypothetical situation to help his readers recognize the serious implications of not living in holiness. Alternate translation: [Suppose we say that we have not sinned. Then we are calling God a liar]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **him … his**
UST God were … God

The pronouns **him** and **his** refer to God in this verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use that here. Alternate translation: [God … God's]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **we make him a liar**
UST we are speaking as if God were a liar

Be sure that it is clear in your translation that God would not actually be a **liar** in this case. Rather, a person who claimed to be without sin would be calling God a liar, since God has said that everyone is a sinner. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [that is the same as calling God a liar, because God has said that we have all sinned]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **his word is not in us**
UST We are rejecting what God has said about us

John is using the term **word** here to mean what God has said by using words. Alternate translation: [we do not believe what God has said]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **his word is not in us**
UST We are rejecting what God has said about us

John is speaking of God's **word** here as if it were an object that could be inside believers. (He also spoke of "truth" in this way in 1:8.) Alternate translation: [we do not believe what God has said]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
sinned	sinned

1 John 2

1 John 2 Introduction

1 John 2 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

1. Genuine believers obey God and love one another (2:1–17, continuing from 1:5)
2. It is false teaching to deny that Jesus is the Messiah (2:18–2:27)
3. Genuine children of God do not sin (2:28–29, continues through 3:10)

In order to show that John is writing something like poetry in 2:12–14, some translations set the statements in those verses farther to the right than the rest of the text, and they begin a new line at the start of each statement.

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

Antichrist

In 2:18 and 2:22, John writes both about a specific person called the Antichrist and about many people who will be "antichrists." The word "antichrist" means "opposed to Christ." The Antichrist is a person who will come just before the return of Jesus and imitate Jesus' work, but he will do that for evil purposes. Before that person comes, there will be many other people who work against Christ. They too are called "antichrists," but as a description rather than as a name. (See: antichrist; and last day, last days, latter days; and evil, wicked, wickedness, unpleasant)

Textual Issues in This Chapter

In 2:20, some ancient manuscripts read "you all know," and that is the reading that ULT follows. However, other ancient manuscripts read "you know all things." It seems more likely, based on everything else in the letter, that "you all know" is the correct original reading, since John is countering the claim of false teachers to know more than other believers. The reading "you know all things" seems to have arisen because copyists felt a need to have an object for the verb "know." Nevertheless, if a translation of the Bible already exists in your region, consider using whichever reading is found in that version. If a translation does not already exist, we recommend that you follow the reading in the ULT text. (See: Textual Variants)

1 John 2:1

ULT	UST
My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone would sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.	*You are as dear to me as though you were my own children. Therefore, I am writing this to you to keep you from sinning. But if any of you does sin, remember that Jesus the Messiah, the righteous one, pleads with the Father and asks him to forgive us.*

ULT **My little children**
UST You are as dear to me as though you were my own children

Here and in several other places in the book, John uses the diminutive form of the word **children** as an affectionate form of address. The ULT shows this by adding the word **little**. If your language has diminutive forms, you may wish to use one here. You could also express the meaning of the diminutive as a term of endearment. Alternate translation: [My dear children]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **My little children**
UST You are as dear to me as though you were my own children

John is using the word **children** to describe the believers to whom he is writing, even though they are adults. They are under his spiritual care, and so he regards them in that sense as if they were his own children. You could translate this plainly, or you could represent the metaphor as a simile, as UST does. Alternate translation: [You dear believers who are under my care]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **I am writing these things**
UST Therefore, I am writing this

Here, **these things** refers generally to everything that John has written about in the letter so far. Alternate translation: [I am writing this letter]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And**
UST But

The word **And** here introduces a contrast between what John hopes to achieve by writing, that these believers will not sin, and what might happen, that one of them might sin. Alternate translation: [However,]
Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **if anyone would sin, we have an advocate with the Father**
UST if any of you does sin, remember that … pleads with the Father and asks him to forgive us

John is describing a hypothetical situation in order to reassure his readers. Alternate translation: [suppose someone does sin. Then we have an advocate with the Father]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous**
UST remember that Jesus the Messiah, the righteous one, pleads with the Father and asks him to forgive us

John assumes that his readers will know that an **advocate** is someone who takes a person's side and pleads on his behalf. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Jesus Christ the righteous will take our side and ask God the Father to forgive us]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the Father**
UST the Father … him

Father is an important title for God. Alternate translation: [God the Father]
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **the righteous**
UST the righteous one

John is using the adjective **righteous** as a noun in order to indicate a specific type of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [the one who is righteous]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
sin	sinning
sin	sin
Father	Father
Jesus	Jesus
Christ	Messiah
righteous	righteous

1 John 2:2

ULT	UST
And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world.	*Jesus is the one who sacrificed his life for us so that God could forgive our sins. And this is true not just of our sins, but of all the sins that all people everywhere have committed!*

ULT **he**
UST Jesus

The pronoun **he** here refers to Jesus, the antecedent in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [Jesus]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world**
UST Jesus is the one who sacrificed his life for us so that God could forgive our sins. And this is true not just of our sins, but of all the sins that all people everywhere have committed

The abstract noun **propitiation** refers to something that someone does for someone else or gives to someone else so that he will no longer be angry. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this term by translating it with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [because of Jesus, God is no longer angry about our sins, and not only about ours, but also about those of the whole world]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the whole world**
UST that all people everywhere have committed

John uses **world** to mean various things in this letter. Here it refers to the people living in the world. Alternate translation: [everyone in the world]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **and not for ours only, but also for the whole world**
UST And this is true not just of our sins, but of all the sins that all people everywhere have committed

John leaves out the word for “sins” in these clauses because it is understood from the previous clause. If it would be helpful in your language, you could include the missing word. Alternate translation: [and not only for our sins, but also for the sins of the whole world]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
propitiation	the one who sacrificed his life for us so that God could forgive
sins	sins
world	people everywhere have committed

1 John 2:3

ULT	UST
And in this we know that we have known him, if we keep his commandments.	*When we obey what God commands us to do, then we can be sure that we truly know God.*

ULT **in this we know that we have known him, if we keep his commandments**
UST When we obey what God commands us to do … we can be sure that we truly know God

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: [if we obey what he has commanded, then we can be assured that we have a close relationship with him]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **in this we know that we have known him, if we keep his commandments**
UST When we obey what God commands us to do … we can be sure that we truly know God

If your language would not use a conditional statement with **if** for something that is true, you could express the same idea using a word like "by" or another way. Alternate translation: [there is a way to be sure that we truly know God. This is by obeying his commandments]
Support Reference: Connect — Factual Conditions

ULT **in this we know**
UST we can be sure

John uses the idiomatic expression **in this we know** many times in this letter. Alternate translation: [this is how we know]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **in this**
UST we can be sure

The pronoun **this** refers to the next thing that John says, that is, **if we keep his commandments**. Use a natural way in your language to make this clear. Alternate translation: [this is how]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **we know that we have known him**
UST we can be sure that we truly know God

John is using the word **know** in two different senses here. See the discussion of the word **know** in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. If your language has different words for these different senses, it would be appropriate to use them here. Alternate translation: [we can be assured that we have a close relationship with him]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **him … his**
UST God … God

In this verse, the pronouns **him** and **his** refer to God, the one who has given the commandments that people must obey. Alternate translation: [God … God's]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

> ULT **if we keep his commandments**
> UST When we obey what God commands us to do

Here, **keep** is an idiom that means “obey.” Alternate translation: [if we obey what he has commanded]
Support Reference: Idiom

> ULT **if we keep his commandments**
> UST When we obey what God commands us to do

If it would be more natural in your language, you could put this phrase first, as in the UST.
Support Reference: Information Structure

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	we can be sure
known	know

1 John 2:4

ULT	UST
The one who says, "I know him," and is not keeping his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in this one.	*If someone says, "I know God well," but that person does not obey what God has commanded, then he is a liar. He is not living according to God's true message.*

ULT **The one who says, "I know him," and is not keeping his commandments is a liar**
UST If someone says, "I know God well," but that person does not obey what God has commanded, then he is a liar

John is describing a hypothetical situation in order to challenge his readers. Alternate translation: [Suppose someone says, "I have a close relationship with God," but he does not obey what God has commanded. Then that person is a liar]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **The one who says**
UST If someone says

By **one**, John does not have a specific person in mind. He means anyone who says this. Alternate translation: [Anyone who says] or [The person who says]
Support Reference: Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **I know him**
UST I know God well

As in the second instance in 2:3, John is using the word **know** in the sense of knowing someone by personal experience. Alternate translation: [I am living in close relationship with God]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **him … his**
UST God … God

In this verse, the pronouns **him** and **his** refer to God, the one who has given the commandments that people must obey. Alternate translation: [God … God's]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and**
UST but

John is using the word **and** to introduce a contrast between what such a person might say and what his conduct actually indicates to be true. Alternate translation: [but]
Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **is not keeping**
UST that person does not obey

In this instance, the word **keep** is an idiom that means "obey." Alternate translation: [does not obey] or [disobeys]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **is a liar, and the truth is not in this one**
UST then he is a liar. He is not living according to God's true message

These two phrases mean similar things. John is likely using repetition for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [is certainly not speaking the truth]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **and the truth is not in this one**
UST He is not living according to God's true message

John is speaking of the **truth** as if it were an object that could be inside someone. See how you translated a similar expression in 1:8. Alternate translation: [and such a person is not speaking the truth]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and the truth is not in this one**
UST He is not living according to God's true message

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **truth** with an adjective such as "true." Alternate translation: [and what such a person says is not true]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	know

1 John 2:5

ULT	UST
But whoever keeps his word, in this one truly the love of God has been perfected. In this we know that we are in him:	*But if someone obeys what God has commanded, that person loves God in every way. This is how we can be sure that we are living closely with God:*

ULT **But**
UST But

This sentence makes a contrast by saying in a positive way what the previous sentence said in a negative way. Indicate this contrast in a natural way in your language. Alternate translation: [On the other hand,]
Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **But whoever keeps his word, in this one truly the love of God has been perfected**
UST But if someone obeys what God has commanded, that person loves God in every way

John is suggesting another hypothetical situation in order to reassure his readers. Alternate translation: [But suppose someone keeps his word. Then the love of God truly has been perfected in that person.]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **keeps his word**
UST obeys what God has commanded

John is using the term **word** to mean what God has commanded by using words. Alternate translation: [obeys God's commandments]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **keeps his word**
UST obeys what God has commanded

In this instance, the word **keep** is an idiom that means "obey." Alternate translation: [obeys God's commandments]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **his … him**
UST God … living closely with God

The pronouns **his** and **him** in this verse refer to God. Alternate translation: [God's … God]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **in this one truly the love of God has been perfected**
UST that person loves God in every way

The phrase **the love of God** could mean one of two things: (1) It could refer to a person loving God. Alternate translation: [that person indeed loves God completely]; or (2) It could refer to God loving people. Alternate translation: [God's love has completely achieved its purpose in that person's life]
Support Reference: Possession

> ULT **in this one truly the love of God has been perfected**
> UST that person loves God in every way

If it would be helpful in your language, you could restate the passive verbal form **has been perfected** with an active verbal form in its place. The person or thing doing the action will depend on how you decide to translate the phrase **the love of God**. Alternate translation: [that person indeed loves God completely] or [God's love has completely achieved its purpose in that person's life]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

> ULT **In this we know that we are in him**
> UST This is how we can be sure that we are living closely with God

The word **this** could be referring to: (1) what John is about to say in verse 6, or (2) what John has just said in verse 5, or (3) both. If your language allows it, you could choose option (3) since both verses are talking about completely obeying God, but most languages will need to choose one or the other.

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **we are in him**
> UST we are living closely with God

John is speaking as if believers could be inside of God. This expression describes having a close relationship with God. Alternate translation: [we are living in fellowship with God]

Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
love	loves
God	God
perfected	in every way
know	we can be sure

1 John 2:5-6

> ULT **In this we know that we are in him: the one saying he remains in him ought, just as that one walked, also to walk himself**
>
> UST This is how we can be sure that we are living closely with God: If anyone says that he is living closely with God, then he should conduct his life as Jesus did when he was here on earth

If it would be a more natural order in your language, you could move the last sentence of verse 5 to the end of verse 6. You would then present the combined verses as 5–6. Alternate translation: [The one saying he remains in him ought, just as that one walked, also to walk himself. That is how we know that we are in him.]

Support Reference: Verse Bridges

1 John 2:6

ULT	UST
the one saying he remains in him ought, just as that one walked, also to walk himself.	*If anyone says that he is living closely with God, then he should conduct his life as Jesus did when he was here on earth.*

ULT **he remains in him**
UST he is living closely with God

See the discussion of the term “remain” in Part 3 of the Introduction to this book. Here to **remain in** God means very much the same thing as to have “fellowship with God” in 1:3 and 1:6 and to “be in” God in 2:5. John is repeating the same idea in different ways. Alternate translation: [he has close fellowship with God] or [he shares life with God]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **he remains in him**
UST he is living closely with God

John once again speaks as if believers could be inside of God. Alternate translation: [he is close friends with God] or [he shares life with God]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **in him**
UST living closely with God

The pronoun **him** refers to God. Alternate translation: [in God]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **ought, just as that one walked, also to walk himself**
UST then he should conduct his life as Jesus did when he was here on earth

As in 1:6 and 1:7, John is using the word **walk** to mean how a person lives and behaves. Alternate translation: [must live as Jesus lived] or [must obey God just as Jesus did]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **ought, just as that one walked, also to walk himself**
UST then he should conduct his life as Jesus did when he was here on earth

John is using the phrase **just as that one walked** specifically to refer to the way that Jesus behaved when he lived on earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [must walk in the same way as Jesus walked when he was living on earth]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **that one**
UST Jesus

John is using the demonstrative pronoun **that one** to refer to Jesus. Alternate translation: [Jesus]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

1 John 2:7

ULT	UST
Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment, which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word that you heard.	*Dear friends, I am not writing this to tell you to do something new. Instead, I am writing this to tell you to do something that you have known that you should do since you first believed in Jesus. This is part of the message that Jesus gave to us and that we have already told to you.*

ULT **Beloved**
UST Dear friends

Beloved is another term of affection by which John addresses the believers to whom he is writing. It involves using the adjective "beloved" as a noun in order to indicate a specific group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [You people whom I love] or [My dear friends]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **from the beginning**
UST since you first believed in Jesus

John uses the phrase **from the beginning** in various ways in this letter. Here it refers to the time when the people to whom he is writing first believed in Jesus. Alternate translation: [ever since you first believed in Jesus]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the word that you heard**
UST part of the message that {Jesus gave to us and that} we have already told to you

John is using **word** to refer to the message that these believers heard, which was communicated through words. Alternate translation: [the message that you heard]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the word that you heard**
UST part of the message that {Jesus gave to us and that} we have already told to you

The implication is that the specific **word** or message that John is describing is the commandment Jesus gave to believers that they should love one another. See the Gospel of John 13:34 and 15:12. John indicates this explicitly in this letter in 3:23 and 4:21. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the commandment Jesus gave that we should love one another]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Beloved	Dear friends

1 John 2:8

ULT	UST
Again, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is going away, and the true light is already shining.	*However, if we think about this in another way, I am telling you to do something new. It is new because the way that the Messiah lived was new, and the way that you are living is new. That is because you are ceasing to do evil, and you are doing good more and more. It is as though you have come out of a dark place and have begun to live in the light that is from God.*

ULT **Again**

UST However, if we think about this in another way

John is using the term **Again** in the sense of "Looking at this again from another perspective." Alternate translation: [On the other hand]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **I am writing a new commandment to you**

UST I am telling you to do something new

John is referring to the same **commandment** as in 2:7, the commandment that Jesus gave to love one another, which the believers have had all along. So he does not mean that he is now writing a **new** and different commandment, but rather that this same commandment, which he called "old" there, can also be considered **new** in a certain sense. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly which **commandment** John is referring to, and you could give the likely reason why it can be considered **new** as well as "old." Alternate translation: [the commandment that I am writing to you, to love one another, is also, in a sense, a new commandment, because it is characteristic of a new way of life]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is going away, and the true light is already shining**

UST It is new because the way that the Messiah lived was new, and the way that you are living is new. That is because you are ceasing to do evil, and you are doing good more and more. It is as though you have come out of a dark place and have begun to live in the light that is from God

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these clauses, since the second clause gives the reason for the result that the first clause describes. It may also be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: [Because the darkness is going away and the true light is already shining, this commandment is true in Jesus and in you]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

> ULT **which is true in him and in you**
> UST It is new because the way that the Messiah lived was new, and the way that you are living is new

Since Jesus consistently obeyed the commandment to love, it is likely that John is emphasizing that believers are doing the same thing themselves. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could bring out this implicit emphasis in your translation. It may also be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: [Jesus truly obeyed this commandment, and you are now truly obeying it as well]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

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> ULT **which is true in him and in you**
> UST It is new because the way that the Messiah lived was new, and the way that you are living is new

John is speaking as if this commandment were **true** inside of Jesus and these believers. Alternate translation, as a new sentence: [Jesus truly obeyed this commandment, and you are now truly obeying it as well]

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **him**
> UST the way that the Messiah lived

The pronoun **him** refers to Jesus. John is using him as the supreme example of loving others. Alternate translation: [Jesus]

Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

> ULT **the darkness is going away, and the true light is already shining**
> UST you are ceasing to do evil, and you are doing good more and more … you have come out of a dark place and have begun to live in the light that is from God

As in 1:5, John is using the word **darkness** to represent evil and the word **light** to represent what is holy, right, and good. The **shining** of the light represents its influence on people. Alternate translation: [what is evil is going away and people are able to see what is genuinely good more and more]

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **the true light**
> UST you are doing good more and more … have begun to live in the light that is from God

Since John calls God “the True One” in 5:20, he may be referring to God’s goodness and holiness when he says **the true light**. Alternate translation: [the goodness of God] or [the holiness of God]

Support Reference: Metonymy

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1 John 2:9

ULT	UST
The one saying he is in the light and hating his brother is in the darkness until now.	*Someone might say that he is living in a good way, just as God wants him to do. That would be like living in light from God. But if he hates any of his fellow believers, then he is still living in a bad way, doing what God does not want, like a person who lives in darkness.*

ULT **The one saying he is in the light and hating his brother is in the darkness until now**
UST Someone might say that he is living in a good way, just as God wants him to do. That would be like living in light from God. But if he hates any of his fellow believers, then he is still living in a bad way, doing what God does not want, like a person who lives in darkness

John is suggesting a further hypothetical situation in order to challenge his readers. Alternate translation: [Suppose someone says that he is in the light, but he hates his brother. That person is actually still in the darkness.]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **he is in the light**
UST he is living in a good way, just as God wants him to do. That would be like living in light from God

As in 1:5 and 2:8, John is using the word **light** to mean what is holy, right, and good. Alternate translation: [he does what is right]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and**
UST But

John is using the word **and** here to introduce a contrast between what such a person might say and what his conduct actually indicates to be true. Alternate translation: [but]
Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **his brother**
UST any of his fellow believers

John is using the term **brother** to mean someone who shares the same faith. Alternate translation: [a fellow believer]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **his brother**
UST any of his fellow believers

Although the term **brother** is masculine, John is using the word in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: [a fellow believer]
Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

> ULT **his brother**
> UST any of his fellow believers

The phrase **his brother** represents any fellow believer in general, not one particular fellow believer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a more natural expression. See the UST.

Support Reference: Generic Noun Phrases

> ULT **is in the darkness**
> UST then he is … living in a bad way, doing what God does not want, like a person who lives in darkness

As in 1:5, John is using the word **darkness** to mean what is wrong or evil. Alternate translation: [is doing what is wrong]

Support Reference: Metaphor

1 John 2:10

ULT	UST
The one loving his brother remains in the light and a stumbling block is not in him.	*But if someone loves his fellow believers, then he is truly living well, like a person who is living in light from God. He will not have a reason to do anything evil as he would have if he hated a fellow believer. This is like a person in daylight who has no reason to trip over anything.*

ULT **The one loving his brother remains in the light**
UST But if someone loves his fellow believers, then he is truly living well, like a person who is living in light from God … This is like a person in daylight

John is suggesting a further hypothetical situation in order to reassure his readers. Alternate translation: [Suppose someone does love his fellow believers. Then he is genuinely doing what is right]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **his brother**
UST his fellow believers

See how you translated **his brother** in 2:9. Alternate translation: [each fellow believer]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **his brother**
UST his fellow believers

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this term by translating this in the plural, since John is speaking of loving all believers. Alternate translation: [each of his brothers]
Support Reference: Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **remains in the light**
UST then he is truly living well, like a person who is living in light from God … This is like a person in daylight

John is using the word **light** to mean what is holy, right, and good. Alternate translation: [is genuinely doing what is right]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **remains in the light**
UST then he is truly living well, like a person who is living in light from God … This is like a person in daylight

See the discussion of the term “remain” in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. Here the word seems to describe behavior that is recognized to be genuine because it is consistent. Alternate translation: [is genuinely doing what is right]
Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **a stumbling block is not in him**
> UST He will not have a reason to do anything evil as he would have if he hated a fellow believer … who has no reason to trip over anything

John is using the term **stumbling block**, which means something that a person would trip over, to mean something that would cause a person to sin. Alternate translation: [he has no reason to sin] or [nothing will cause him to sin]

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **a stumbling block is not in him**
> UST He will not have a reason to do anything evil as he would have if he hated a fellow believer … who has no reason to trip over anything

John speaks of this **stumbling block** being **in** or inside a person because it represents the hatred for a fellow believer that he describes in 2:9. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this explicitly. Alternate translation: [he has no hatred inside of him that will cause him to sin]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
loving	loves

1 John 2:11

ULT	UST
But the one hating his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.	*But anyone who hates a fellow believer is living in a completely wrong way. He does not understand how he should live, because the wrong things that he is doing are keeping him from understanding God's way. It is as though he is walking in darkness and cannot see where to go.*

ULT **his brother**
UST a fellow believer

See how you translated **his brother** in 2:9. Alternate translation: [a fellow believer]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **is in the darkness and walks in the darkness**
UST is living in a completely wrong way … It is as though he is walking in darkness

These two phrases mean similar things. It is likely that John is using repetition for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases and express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [is living in complete darkness]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **is in the darkness and walks in the darkness**
UST is living in a completely wrong way … It is as though he is walking in darkness

As in 1:5, John is using the word **darkness** to mean what is wrong or evil. Alternate translation: [thinks in a way that is evil and acts in a way that is evil]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **walks in the darkness**
UST is living in a completely wrong way … It is as though he is walking in darkness

John is using the word **walks** to mean how a person lives and behaves. Alternate translation: [conducts his life in wrong ways]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes**
UST He does not understand how he should live, because the wrong things that he is doing are keeping him from understanding God's way … cannot see where to go

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: [because the darkness has blinded his eyes, he does not know where he is going]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **he does not know where he is going**
UST He does not understand how he should live … cannot see where to go

This is a continuation of the metaphor of walking as a figurative description of how a person lives and behaves. Alternate translation: [he does not know the right way to live]
Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **because the darkness has blinded his eyes**
> UST because the wrong things that he is doing are keeping him from understanding God's way

John is using blindness to mean a loss of moral sense. Alternate translation: [because his evil thoughts are keeping him from knowing right and wrong]

Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	He does … understand … see

1 John 2:12

ULT	UST
I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven because of his name.	*I am writing to you, whom I love as though you were my own children, because God has forgiven your sins because of what Jesus has done for you.*

ULT **little children**
UST whom I love as though you were my own children

The term **little children** here could refer to: (1) all of the believers to whom John is writing. This is the way that he uses this term in 2:1 and in several other places in this letter. See the explanation of it in two of the notes to 2:1. If that is the sense, then John divides the believers into only two groups in verses 12–14, the older ones and the younger ones. See the UST. Or it could refer to: (2) only some of the believers. In that case, John is addressing the believers in three different groups in verses 12–14, and this group would represent new believers, that is, those who have very recently put their faith in Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins. This would also apply to the similar term in 2:14. Alternate translation: [new believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **because**
UST because

The word translated as **because** here could also be translated as "that." This also applies to the same phrase that is used several times in verses 13 and 14. In other words, what follows this word could be: (1) the reason that John is writing. Alternate translation: [since]; or (2) the content that John wants to communicate. Alternate translation: [that]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **your sins have been forgiven**
UST God has forgiven your sins

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form, and you can state who has done the action. Alternate translation: [God has forgiven your sins]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **because of his name**
UST because of what Jesus has done for you

The pronoun **his** refers to Jesus. Alternate translation: [because of the name of Jesus]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **because of his name**
UST because of what Jesus has done for you

John is using the **name** of Jesus to represent who Jesus is and what he has done. Alternate translation: [on account of Jesus]
Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
sins	sins
forgiven	forgiven

1 John 2:13

ULT	UST
I am writing to you, fathers, because you know the one who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have triumphed over the evil one.	*I am writing to you who have been believers longer than the others. I am writing to you because you are living closely with Jesus, the person who has always been alive. I am writing to you newer, but steadfast, believers because Satan, that evil being, has tried to tempt you to do wrong, but you have successfully resisted him.*

ULT **fathers**
UST who have been believers longer than the others

The term **fathers** here is likely a figurative description of one part of the believers. In that case, it could mean either: (1) mature believers or (2) church leaders.
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **you know**
UST you are living closely with

As in the second usage in 2:4, John is using the word **know** in the sense of knowing a person. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [you know very well]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the one {who is} from the beginning**
UST Jesus, the person who has always been alive

John uses the phrase **from the beginning** in various ways in this letter. Here it describes Jesus or possibly God the Father. John refers to Jesus with these same words at the beginning of this letter and in a similar way in John 1:1–2. Alternate translation: [him who has always existed] or [Jesus, who has always existed]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **young men**
UST newer, but steadfast, believers

Here, **young men** is likely a figurative description of a part of the group of believers. It probably refers to people who have become strong in their faith, even if they are not yet as mature as those in the group of **fathers**, since **young men** are in the time of life when they are strong and vigorous. Alternate translation: [strong believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **young men**
UST newer, but steadfast, believers

Although the term **men** is masculine, John is likely using the word in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: [strong believers]
Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **you have triumphed over the evil one**
UST Satan, that evil being, has tried to tempt you to do wrong, but you have successfully resisted him

John speaks of these strong believers refusing to do what the devil wants them to do as if they had defeated him in a struggle. Alternate translation: [you refuse to do what the evil one wants you to do]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the evil one**
UST Satan, that evil being … him

John is using the adjective **evil** as a noun in order to indicate a specific being. ULT adds **one** to show this. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [the one who is evil]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the evil one**
UST Satan, that evil being … him

John is speaking of Satan, also known as the devil, by association with his characteristic of being **evil**. Alternate translation: [the devil] or [Satan]
Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	you are living closely with
evil one	Satan

1 John 2:14

ULT	UST
I have written to you, young children, because you know the Father. I have written to you, fathers, because you know the one who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God remains in you, and you have triumphed over the evil one.	*I have written to you whom I love as though you were my own little children because you have a close relationship with God the Father. I have written to you who have been believers longer than the others because you have a close relationship with Jesus, the person who has always been alive. I have written to you newer, but steadfast, believers because you are spiritually strong. I have also written to you because you continue to obey what God commands and because you have successfully resisted Satan, that evil being, when he tried to tempt you to do wrong.*

ULT **I have written to you, young children, because you know the Father**
UST I have written to you whom I love as though you were my own little children because you have a close relationship with God the Father

This sentence is similar to the sentence in 2:12. The next two sentences in this verse mean basically the same thing as the two sentences in 2:13. John is using these repetitions for emphasis and for poetic effect. For those reasons, it would be appropriate to translate all of these sentences separately and not combine them with the ones in the previous two verses, even if you combine parallel statements with similar meanings elsewhere in the book.
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **I have written to you, young children, because you know the Father**
UST I have written to you whom I love as though you were my own little children because you have a close relationship with God the Father

In some Bibles, this sentence comes at the end of 2:13 instead of at the beginning of this verse. The verse divisions were introduced to the Bible many centuries after its books were written, and their purpose is only to help readers find things easily. So the placement of this sentence, either at the start of this verse or at the end of the previous one, does not create any significant difference in meaning. If a translation of the Bible already exists in your region, consider using the placement in that version. If not, we recommend that you follow the placement in the ULT text.
Support Reference: Textual Variants

ULT **I have written to you**
UST I have written to you

By saying **I have written**, John is expressing himself slightly differently than in 2:12–13, where he says, “I am writing.” The difference is likely only for emphasis, as John looks back at what he has just said and indicates that he is saying it again. However, if your language distinguishes between the present and present perfect tenses, it would be appropriate to show the difference in your translation.
Support Reference: Verbs

ULT **young children**
UST whom I love as though you were my own little children

While **young children** is a different term from "little children" in 2:12, it means the same thing. See how you translated the similar term there. Alternate translation: [who are like my own children] or [new believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **you know**
UST you have a close relationship with

As in 2:4, John is using the word **know** in a specific sense. See how you translated it there and in 2:13. Alternate translation: [you are very close with]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the Father**
UST God the Father

Father is an important title for God. Alternate translation: [God the Father]
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **fathers**
UST who have been believers longer than the others

The term **fathers** likely has the same figurative meaning as in 2:13. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [mature believers] or [church leaders]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **you know**
UST you have a close relationship with

As in 2:4, 2:13, and earlier in this verse, John is using the word **know** in a specific sense. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [you are very close with]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the one {who is} from the beginning**
UST Jesus, the person who has always been alive

John uses the phrase **from the beginning** in various ways in this letter. Here it describes Jesus or possibly God the Father. John refers to Jesus with these same words at the beginning of this letter, in 2:13, and in a similar way in John 1:1–2. Alternate translation: [him who has always existed] or [Jesus, who has always existed]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **young men**
UST newer, but steadfast, believers

The term **young men** likely has the same figurative meaning here as in 2:13. Alternate translation: [strong believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **young men**
UST newer, but steadfast, believers

Although the term **men** is masculine, John is likely using the word in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: [strong believers]
Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **you are strong**
UST you are spiritually strong

John is using the word **strong** not literally to describe believers' physical strength, but to describe their faithfulness to Jesus. Alternate translation: [you are faithful to Jesus]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the word of God remains in you**
UST you continue to obey what God commands

See the discussion of the term "remain" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. Here the word seems to describe behavior that is recognized to be genuine because it is consistent. Alternate translation: [you genuinely obey what God has commanded]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the word of God**
UST what God commands

John is using the term **word** to refer to what God has commanded using words. Alternate translation: [what God has commanded]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **you have triumphed over the evil one**
UST you have successfully resisted {Satan,} that evil being, when he tried to tempt you to do wrong

John speaks of these strong believers refusing to do what the devil wants them to do as if they had defeated him in a struggle. Alternate translation: [you have refused to do what the devil wants you to do]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the evil one**
UST Satan, that evil being … he

John is using the adjective **evil** as a noun in order to indicate a specific being. ULT adds **one** to show this. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [the one who is evil]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the evil one**
UST Satan, that evil being … he

John is speaking of the devil by association with his characteristic of being **evil**. Alternate translation: [the devil] or [Satan]
Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	you have a close relationship with
Father	God the Father
know	you have a close relationship with
word of God	what God commands
evil one	Satan

1 John 2:15

ULT	UST
Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.	*Do not desire to be like people who do not honor God. Do not desire the things that they want to have. If anyone desires to be like those people, he is proving that he does not love God the Father.*

ULT **Do not love the world nor the things in the world**
UST Do not desire to be like people who do not honor God. Do not desire the things that they want to have

In the second phrase in this sentence, John leaves out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from the first phrase. Alternate translation: [Do not love the world, and do not love any of the things that are in the world]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **Do not love the world**
UST Do not desire to be like people who do not honor God

John uses **world** to mean various things in this letter. Here it refers to the system of values that people share who do not honor God. This system is necessarily contrary to the values that godly people have. Alternate translation: [Do not share the ungodly value system of the people who do not honor God]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **nor the things in the world**
UST Do not desire the things that they want to have

This phrase is more specific than the preceding one. Here, John warns believers against loving the things that are part of our material world. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: [No, do not love the things that ungodly people want to get for themselves]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him**
UST If anyone desires to be like those people, {he is proving that} he does not love God the Father

John is describing a hypothetical situation in order to challenge his readers. Alternate translation: [Suppose someone loves the world. Then the love of the Father is not in him]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **the love of the Father is not in him**
UST he does not love God the Father

The phrase **the love of the Father** could mean: (1) the love that a person has for God the Father. Alternate translation: [that person does not really love God the Father]; or (2) the love that God has for people. Alternate translation: [God the Father's love is not genuinely at work in that person]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **of the Father**
UST God the Father

Father is an important title for God. Alternate translation: [of God the Father]
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
love	Do … desire to be like
world	people who do not honor God
world	things that they want to have
loves	desires to be like … he is proving that
world	those people
love	love
Father	God the Father

1 John 2:16

ULT	UST
For everything that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the arrogance of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.	*I say that such a person does not love God the Father because the way that ungodly people live is not the way that God our Father teaches us to live. They want to fulfill their physical desires. They want to get for themselves the things that they see. They boast about all of the things that they own. All of these things come from the selfish and ungodly way of thinking.*

ULT **For**

UST I say that such a person does not love God the Father because

In this verse, John is giving the reason why the previous sentence is true. If it would be helpful in your language, you could put this reason before that statement of result by combining this verse and the previous one into a verse bridge. In order to create a verse bridge, you could begin this verse with "Since" instead of **For**; you could end it with a comma instead of a period; and you could make it the beginning of the second sentence in the previous verse, putting it before "if anyone loves the world."

Support Reference: Verse Bridges

ULT **everything that {is} in the world**

UST the way that ungodly people live

See how you translated the similar expression in 2:15. Alternate translation: [everything that characterizes the ungodly value system of the people who do not honor God]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the lust of the flesh**

UST They want to fulfill their physical desires

John is using the term **flesh** to mean the physical human body, which is made of **flesh**. Alternate translation: [the strong desire to have sinful physical pleasure]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the lust of the eyes**

UST They want to get for themselves the things that they see

John is using the term **eyes** to mean the ability to see. Alternate translation: [the strong desire to have the things that we see]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the arrogance of life**

UST They boast about all of the things that they own

John is likely using the Greek term that ULT translates as **life** in one of its specific senses, to mean "possessions," as in 3:17. Alternate translation: [pride in one's possessions]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **is not from the Father but is from the world**
UST is not the way that God our Father teaches us to live … All of these things come from the selfish and ungodly way of thinking

See how you translated the term **world** in 2:15. It has a similar meaning in this verse. Alternate translation: [does not represent how God the Father wants us to live, but instead comes from an ungodly value system]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the Father**
UST the way that God our Father teaches us to live

Father is an important title for God. Alternate translation: [God the Father]
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
world	the way that ungodly people live
lust	They want
lust	They want
Father	Father
world	the selfish and ungodly way of thinking

1 John 2:17

ULT	UST
And the world is going away, and its desire, but the one doing the will of God remains to eternity.	*The people who do not honor God will disappear, along with all of the things that they desire. But the people who do what God wants them to do will live forever!*

ULT **the world**
UST The people who do not honor God

See how you translated the term **world** in 2:15. It has a similar meaning in this verse. Alternate translation: [the ungodly value system of the people who do not honor God]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the world is going away**
UST The people who do not honor God will disappear

John speaks of the **world** as if it were leaving. Alternate translation: [the world is ending]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and its desire**
UST along with all of the things that they desire … the people

John is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: [and its desire is also going away]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **its desire**
UST all of the things that they desire … the people

John is using the possessive form to show that the **world** is the source of this **desire** and gives it its character. Alternate translation: [the worldly desire] or [people's desire for the world] or [the desire that this system of values creates in people]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **its desire**
UST all of the things that they desire … the people

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this term by translating this in the plural, since John is referring to all of the different types of **desire** associated with the **world** that he described in 2:16. Alternate translation: [worldly desires] or [the desires that this system of values creates in people]
Support Reference: Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **remains to eternity**
UST will live forever

See the discussion of the term "remain" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. Here the word refers to continuing existence. Alternate translation: [will live forever]
Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **to eternity**
> UST forever

This is an idiom. Consider using an idiom in your language that has this meaning. Alternate translation: [forever]

Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
world	The people who do not honor God
desire	desire
God	God
will of God	what God wants them to do

1 John 2:18

ULT	UST
Young children, it is the last hour, and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, indeed now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.	*You who are as dear to me as though you were my own children, I want you to know that this is the time just before Jesus returns to earth. You have already heard that a person is coming who will strongly oppose the Messiah. In fact, many people like that, who are against the true Messiah, are already here. Because of this, we know that it is that time.*

ULT **Young children**
UST You who are as dear to me as though you were my own children

Young children is the same term that John used in 2:14 that seems to be a stylistic variation of the term that he uses in 2:1 and 2:12, as well as in several other places in the book, to address all of the believers to whom he is writing. See how you translated this in those places.
Alternate translation: [My dear children] or [You dear believers who are under my care]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **it is the last hour**
UST I want you to know that this is the time just before Jesus returns to earth

John is using the term **hour** to refer a specific time. The expression **the last hour** refers specifically to the period of time at the end of earthly history just before Jesus returns.
Alternate translation: [Jesus will return soon … Jesus will return soon]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **antichrist is coming, indeed now many antichrists have come**
UST a person is coming who will strongly oppose the Messiah. In fact, many people like that, who are against the true Messiah, are already here

See the discussion of the terms **antichrist** and **antichrists** in the introduction to this chapter.
Alternate translation: [someone is coming who will lead a great opposition to Jesus, already many people are opposing Jesus in that way now]
Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
hour	the time
antichrist	a person … who will strongly oppose the Messiah
antichrists	people like that, who are against the true Messiah
know	know
hour	time

1 John 2:19

ULT	UST
They went out from us, but they were not from us. For if they had been from us, they would have remained with us, but so that they would be made apparent that they are all not from us.	*These people refused to remain in our congregations. However, they never really belonged with us in the first place. After all, if they had belonged with us, they would not have left us. But when they left us, then we clearly saw that none of them had actually joined with us.*

ULT **They went out from us**

UST These people refused to remain in our congregations

These people formerly met with the group of believers to whom John is writing. While they physically left the places where the believers met, John is also using the expression **went out** to mean that these people stopped being part of the group. Alternate translation: [They left our group of believers in Jesus]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **but they were not from us … they are all not from us**

UST However, they never really belonged with us in the first place … none of them had actually joined with us

John is using the expression **from us** in a slightly different sense in these two instances than in the first instance that says, **They went out from us**. In the first instance, it means that these people left the group. In these instances, it means that they were never genuinely part of the group. Alternate translation: [but they were never genuinely part of our group … none of them are genuinely part of our group]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **they were not from us**

UST they never really belonged with us in the first place

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly why John makes this claim. Alternate translation: [they were never genuinely part of our group, because they did not actually believe in Jesus in the first place]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **For if they had been from us, they would have remained with us**

UST After all, if they had belonged with us, they would not have left us

John is presenting a situation that is not real to help his readers recognize why the claim that he is making is true. Alternate translation: [We know that they were not genuinely part of our group, because they did not continue to participate in it]

Support Reference: Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions

ULT **they would have remained with us**

UST they would not have left us

See the discussion of the term “remain” in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. Here the word seems to refer to continuing participation in a group. Alternate translation: [they would have continued to participate in our group]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **but so that they would be made apparent that they are all not from us**
UST But {when they left us,} then we clearly saw that none of them had actually joined with us

John is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from the previous sentence. Alternate translation: [but they went out from us so that they would be revealed as not genuinely part of our group]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **so that they would be made apparent**
UST when they left us, then we clearly saw

See the discussion of the term “appear” in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. Here, the people were revealed as unbelievers when they left the group. If your language does not use passive forms, you can express this with an active form, and you can state what is doing the action. Alternate translation: [they left so that their actions would reveal]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

1 John 2:20

ULT	UST
And you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.	*But as for you, the Holy Messiah has given you his Spirit. As a result, you all know what is true.*

ULT **And**
UST But

John is using the word **And** to introduce a contrast between the people who left the group and the remaining believers to whom he is writing. Alternate translation: [However,]
Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **you have an anointing from the Holy One**
UST as for you, the Holy Messiah has given you his Spirit

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **anointing** with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: [the Holy One has anointed you]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **you have an anointing from the Holy One**
UST as for you, the Holy Messiah has given you his Spirit

The word **anointing** refers to the practice, seen often in the Old Testament, of pouring oil on a person to set that person apart to serve God. If your readers would not be familiar with this practice, you could describe it specifically in your translation. Alternate translation: [the Holy One has poured oil on you to set you apart to serve him]
Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **you have an anointing from the Holy One**
UST as for you, the Holy Messiah has given you his Spirit

Here John is using **anointing** to refer to the Holy Spirit. Just as people poured oil on kings and priests to set them apart for service to God, God gives the Holy Spirit to believers to set them apart and equip them to serve God. John says specifically in 3:24 and 4:13 that God has given the Spirit to believers in this way. Alternate translation: [the Holy One has given you his Spirit]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the Holy One**
UST the Holy Messiah

John is using the adjective **Holy** as a noun in order to indicate a specific person. ULT adds **One** to show this. ULT capitalizes both of these words to show that they are describing a divine person. Your language may allow you to use this adjective as a noun. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent expression. This could mean: (1) Jesus. In 2:27 John speaks of this anointing as coming from Jesus. Alternate translation: [the Messiah, the One who is holy]; or (2) God the Father. Alternate translation: [God, the One who is holy]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

> ULT **you all know**
> UST you all know what is true

See the discussion of textual issues at the end of the introduction to this chapter to decide whether to follow the reading of ULT and say **you all know** or to follow the reading of some other versions and say "you know all things."

Support Reference: Textual Variants

> ULT **you all know**
> UST you all know what is true

Based on what he says in the next verse, John likely means here that the believers to whom he is writing **all know** the truth. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [you all know the truth]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
anointing	his Spirit
Holy One	Holy Messiah
know	know

1 John 2:21

ULT	UST
I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and that every lie is not from the truth.	*I am not writing this letter to you because you do not know the true things that God has told us, but because you do know them. You also know enough to recognize and reject every lie that is not one of the true things that God has told us.*

ULT **I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it**

UST I am not writing this letter to you because you do not know the true things {that God has told us}, but because you do know them

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this double negative by translating it as a positive statement. Since John then repeats the statement in positive form in the next phrase, you could make the connection to that phrase as an affirmation rather than as a contrast. Alternate translation: [I have written to you because you know the truth, yes, because you do know it]

Support Reference: Double Negatives

ULT **I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it**

UST I am not writing this letter to you because you do not know the true things {that God has told us}, but because you do know them

If saying **I have not written to you** seems wrong or confusing in your language, you could move the negative to the next clause. Alternate translation: [I have written to you not because you do not know the truth, but because you do know the truth] or [I have written to you not to inform you of the truth, but I have written to you because you already know it]

Support Reference: Connect — Exception Clauses

ULT **the truth … from the truth**

UST the true things that God has told us … one of the true things that God has told us

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **truth** with an adjective such as "true." Alternate translation: [what is true … from what is true]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the truth … from the truth**

UST the true things that God has told us … one of the true things that God has told us

John is likely referring to the teaching that believers have received from Jesus by association with the way that it is true. Alternate translation: [the true teaching that we received from Jesus … from this true teaching]

Support Reference: Metonymy

> ULT **and that every lie is not from the truth**
> UST You also know enough to recognize and reject every lie that is not one of the true things that God has told us

John is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from earlier in the sentence. Alternate translation: [and you know that every lie is not from the truth]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

> ULT **every lie is not from the truth**
> UST every lie that is not one of the true things that God has told us

If it would be clearer in your language, you could make the subject of this phrase negative and the verb positive. Alternate translation: [no lie is from the truth]

Support Reference: Double Negatives

> ULT **from the truth**
> UST one of the true things that God has told us

This second occurrence of **the truth** could refer to: (1) The same as the first occurrence. Alternate translation: [part of God's true message]; or (2) God, who is the source of all truth. Alternate translation: [from God, the One who is true]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	know
know	know

1 John 2:22

ULT	UST
Who is the liar if not the one denying that Jesus is the Christ? This one is the antichrist, the one denying the Father and the Son.	*The worst liars are the ones who deny that Jesus is the Messiah. All who do that are against the Messiah. They are refusing to believe both in God the Father and in Jesus his Son.*

ULT **Who is the liar if not the one denying that Jesus is the Christ**
UST The worst liars are the ones who deny that Jesus is the Messiah

John is using the question form for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement or exclamation. Alternate translation: [Anyone who denies that Jesus is the Messiah is certainly a liar!]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **not the one denying that Jesus is the Christ**
UST are the ones who deny that Jesus is the Messiah

For emphasis, John is using a double negative in Greek, specifically, a negative verb (**denies**) with a negative particle, "not." In English, it would come out as "the one who denies that Jesus is not the Christ." In Greek, the second negative does not cancel the first to create a positive meaning. But in English, the meaning would inaccurately be positive, which is why ULT uses only one negative. It leaves out "not" and says **the one denying that Jesus is the Christ**. However, if your language uses double negatives for emphasis that do not cancel one another, it would be appropriate to use that construction in your translation.
Support Reference: Double Negatives

ULT **This one is the antichrist**
UST All who do that are against the Messiah

John is not referring here to the ultimate **antichrist** who will appear at the end of earthly history. John does not have a specific person in view here. Rather, he is speaking generally of all people who oppose Christ. See how you translated the term **antichrist** in 2:18. Alternate translation: [Such a person is the enemy of Jesus]
Support Reference: Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **the one denying the Father and the Son**
UST They are refusing to believe both in God the Father and in Jesus his Son

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate explicitly why John says this about these people. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: [By denying that Jesus is the Messiah, he is denying both God the Father, who sent Jesus to be the Messiah, and Jesus his Son, whom he sent]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the Father and the Son**
UST God the Father and in Jesus his Son

Father and **Son** are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus. Alternate translation: [God the Father and Jesus his Son]
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Jesus	Jesus
Christ	Messiah
antichrist	against the Messiah
Father	Father
Son	in Jesus … Son

1 John 2:23

ULT	UST
Everyone denying the Son does not have the Father. The one confessing the Son also has the Father.	*Those who refuse to acknowledge that Jesus is God's Son are in no way joined with God the Father. But those who acknowledge that Jesus is God's Son are also joined with God the Father.*

ULT **Everyone denying the Son**
UST Those who refuse to acknowledge that Jesus is God's Son

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly what this means in light of what John says in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [Everyone who denies that Jesus is the Son of God and the Messiah]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the Son**
UST that Jesus is God's Son

Son is an important title for Jesus.
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **does not have the Father … also has the Father**
UST are in no way joined with God the Father … are also joined with God the Father

The language of possession that John is using actually indicates that such a person does or does not belong to God, rather than that God does or does not belong to such a person. Alternate translation: [does not belong to the Father … belongs to the Father as well]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **the Father**
UST God the Father

Father is an important title for God. Alternate translation: [God the Father … God the Father]
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **The one confessing the Son**
UST But those who acknowledge that Jesus is God's Son

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly what this means in light of what John says in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [Everyone who truly believes and acknowledges publicly that Jesus is the Son of God and the Messiah]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Son	that Jesus is God's Son
Father	Father
confessing	who acknowledge
Son	that Jesus is God's Son
Father	Father

1 John 2:24

ULT	UST
You, let remain in you what you have heard from the beginning. If what you have heard from the beginning remains in you, you will also remain in the Son and in the Father.	*Here is what you must do, unlike those people who deny Jesus. You must continue to believe and live by the truth about Jesus the Messiah that you first heard. If you continue to believe and live by the truth about Jesus the Messiah that you first heard, then you will continue to share life with Jesus the Son and God the Father.*

ULT **You**
UST Here is what you must do, unlike those people who deny Jesus

Here John turns from talking about people in general to giving direct instruction to his readers. He indicates this emphasis by beginning his instruction with **You**. Use a natural way to indicate this emphasis in your language. Alternate translation: [As for you]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **what you have heard … what you have heard**
UST the truth about Jesus the Messiah that you … heard … the truth about Jesus the Messiah that you … heard

John is referring implicitly to the teaching about Jesus that these believers **have heard**. Alternate translation: [the teaching you have heard … the teaching you have heard]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **from the beginning**
UST first

John uses the phrase **from the beginning** in various ways in this letter. Here it refers to the time when the people to whom he is writing first believed in Jesus. Alternate translation: [ever since you first believed in Jesus … ever since you first believed in Jesus]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **let remain in you … remains in you**
UST You must continue to believe and live by … you continue to believe and live by

See the discussion of the term “remain” in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. In these instances, in reference to the teaching about Jesus, the word seems to refer to continuing belief in that teaching. Alternate translation: [continue to believe … you continue to believe]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **If what you have heard from the beginning remains in you, you will also remain in the Son and in the Father**
UST If you continue to believe and live by the truth about Jesus the Messiah that you first heard, then you will continue to share life with Jesus the Son and God the Father

John is describing a conditional situation in order to reassure his readers. Alternate translation: [As long as what you have heard from the beginning remains in you, then you will also remain in the Son and in the Father]
Support Reference: Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

ULT **you will also remain in the Son and in the Father**
UST then you will continue to share life with Jesus the Son and God the Father

See the discussion of the term “remain” in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. In this instance, it seems to mean the same thing as in 2:6. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [you will also continue to have a close relationship with the Son and with the Father]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the Son … the Father**
UST Jesus the Son … God the Father

Son and **Father** are important titles for Jesus and God, respectively. Alternate translation: [Jesus the Son of God … God the Father]
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Son	Jesus … Son
Father	Father

1 John 2:25

ULT	UST
And this is the promise that he promised to us—eternal life.	*And what Jesus promised us is that God will enable us to live forever!*

ULT **the promise that he promised to us**
UST what Jesus promised us

John is using a construction in which a verb and its object come from the same root. You may be able to use the same construction in your language to express the meaning here. Alternatively, your language may have another way of expressing this. Alternate translation: [the promise that he made to us] or [what he promised us]
Support Reference: Poetry

ULT **he**
UST Jesus

The pronoun **he** could refer in this context either to Jesus or to God the Father. However, it seems more likely that it refers to Jesus, since John has just talked in 2:22–23 about denying or confessing him, and it was Jesus who promised **eternal life** to everyone who believed in him. See, for example, the Gospel of John 3:36 and 6:47. Alternate translation: [Jesus]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **eternal life**
UST God will enable us to live forever

John means more than physical **life**. This expression can indicate living forever in the presence of God after death, a commonly recognized meaning, but it can also indicate receiving power from God in this life to live in a new way. Alternate translation: [that we would have power to live a new life now and that we would live with him forever after we die]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
promise	what
promised	promised
eternal	forever

1 John 2:26

ULT	UST
I have written these things to you about the ones leading you astray.	*I am writing this letter to you to warn you about people who want to deceive you about Jesus.*

ULT **the ones leading you astray**
UST people who want to deceive you about Jesus

John speaks of these people as if they were guides who were **leading** others in the wrong direction. This is a metaphor for their attempts to get the people to whom John is writing to believe things that are not true. Alternate translation: [those who are deceiving you] or [those who are trying to get you to believe things that are not true]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the ones leading you astray**
UST people who want to deceive you about Jesus

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly in what way these people are **leading** others **astray**. Alternate translation: [the people who are leading you astray about Jesus] or [the people who are lying to you about Jesus]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

1 John 2:27

ULT	UST
And you, the anointing that you received from him remains in you, and you do not have need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, remain in him.	*Here is what you should do about those people who are trying to deceive you. God's Spirit, whom you received from Jesus, continues to live in you. So you do not need anyone else to be your teacher. God's Spirit is teaching you everything that you need to know. He always teaches the truth and never says anything that is false. So continue to live in the way that he has taught you and continue to live closely with Jesus.*

ULT **And you … as**
UST Here is what you should do about those people who are trying to deceive you

Here John states again the emphasis that he started in 2:24, continuing his direct instruction to his readers. Use a natural way to indicate this continuing emphasis in your language. Alternate translation: [Now as for you]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the anointing that you received from him**
UST God's Spirit, whom you received from Jesus

See how you translated the word **anointing** in 2:20. Alternate translation: [the Spirit, whom Jesus has given you]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **from him … in him**
UST from Jesus … with Jesus

Like the pronoun "he" in 2:25, the words **him** and **his** in this verse likely refer to Jesus. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the name instead of a pronoun. Alternate translation: [from Jesus … in Jesus]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **remains in you**
UST continues to live in you

See the discussion of the term "remain" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. In this instance, it seems to refer to the continuing presence of the Spirit with a believer. Alternate translation: [lives inside of you]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and**
UST So

John is using the word **and** to introduce the results of what he says in the previous part of this sentence. Alternate translation: [and so]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **his anointing**
UST God's Spirit

See how you translated **his anointing** earlier in this verse. Alternate translation: [his Spirit]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **about all things**
UST everything that you need to know

This is a generalization for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [about the things that you need to know]
Support Reference: Hyperbole

ULT **it has taught you**
UST So continue to live in the way that he has taught you

Since the Spirit is a person, if you translate **anointing** as "Spirit" in this verse, it may also be more appropriate in your language to use a personal pronoun in this clause. Alternate translation: [he has taught you] or [the Spirit has taught you]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **remain in him**
UST and continue to live closely with Jesus

See the discussion of the term "remain" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. In this instance, it seems to mean the same thing as in 2:6. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [continue to have a close relationship with him]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **remain in him**
UST and continue to live closely with Jesus

John is speaking as if believers could be inside of God. Alternate translation: [continue to have a close relationship with him]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
anointing	God's Spirit
received	received
anointing	Spirit

1 John 2:28

ULT	UST
And now, little children, remain in him, so that whenever he appears, we may have boldness and not be put to shame by him at his coming.	*Now, my dear ones, I urge you to continue to live closely with Jesus. That way, when he comes back again, we will be confident that he will accept us. If we do that, we will not be ashamed to stand before him when he returns.*

ULT **And now**
UST Now

John uses the expression **And now** to introduce a new part of the letter, in which he will talk about being children of God and about the return of Jesus. In your translation, you could use a word, phrase, or other method that is natural in your language for introducing a new topic.
Support Reference: Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **little children**
UST my dear ones

John readdresses the recipients as he begins a new section of the letter. See how you translated **little children** in 2:1. Alternate translation: [you dear believers who are under my care]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **remain in him**
UST I urge you to continue to live closely with Jesus

See the discussion of the term “remain” in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. In this instance, John seems to be using the expression in the same way that he has just used it in 2:27. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [continue to have a close relationship with him]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **him … whenever he appears … by him … his**
UST Jesus … when he comes back again … to stand before him … he

The pronouns **him**, **he**, and **his** refer to Jesus in this verse, since John speaks of his **coming** or return. Consider whether it might be helpful to your readers or more natural in your language to use the name “Jesus” in one or more of these instances.
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **whenever he appears**
UST when he comes back again

See the discussion of the term “appear” in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. Here the term could have either an active or a passive meaning. In either case, John is not saying that Jesus will only appear to return. He is saying that Jesus will return actually and physically. (1) If the meaning is active, John is speaking of the act of Jesus physically returning to earth. Alternate translation: [when Jesus returns]; or (2) If the meaning is passive, John is speaking of God revealing Jesus to the world as its true king. Alternate translation: [when Jesus is revealed] or [when God brings Jesus]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **we may have boldness and not be put to shame by him**
UST we will be confident {that he will accept us}. {If we do that,} we will not be ashamed to stand before him

These two phrases mean similar things. John is likely using the repetition for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases into an emphatic expression. Alternate translation: [we may be completely confident at his coming]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **we may have boldness**
UST we will be confident that he will accept us

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **boldness** with an adjective. Alternate translation: [we may be bold]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **not be put to shame by him**
UST we will not be ashamed to stand before him

John is using the word **him**, meaning Jesus, to mean the presence of Jesus. Alternate translation: [we will not be ashamed to be in his presence]
Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **not be put to shame by him**
UST we will not be ashamed to stand before him

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [we will not be ashamed to be in his presence]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
shame	ashamed

1 John 2:29

ULT	UST
If you know that he is righteous, you also know that everyone doing righteousness has been begotten from him.	*You know that God always does what is right. Because of that, you also know that all those who continue doing what is right are the ones who have become God's spiritual children.*

ULT **If you know that he is righteous**
UST You know that God always does what is right. Because of that

John is using the form of conditional possibility here, but he is stating something that is actually true. In Greek, this was a way of affirming that the part that follows this statement is also 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 John is saying is not certain, then you could translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: [Since you know that God is righteous]

Support Reference: Connect — Factual Conditions

ULT **he is … him**
UST God always does … are the ones who have become God's spiritual children

The pronouns **he** and **him** likely refer to God the Father, since in the next two verses John says that believers are "children of God," and he speaks in this verse of those who have **been begotten from him**. Alternate translation: [God is … God]

Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **everyone doing righteousness**
UST all those who continue doing what is right

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **righteousness** with an adjective such as "right." Alternate translation: [everyone who does what is right]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **everyone doing righteousness has been begotten from him**
UST all those who continue doing what is right are the ones who have become God's spiritual children

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [God is the father of everyone who does what is right]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **everyone doing righteousness has been begotten from him**
UST all those who continue doing what is right are the ones who have become God's spiritual children

John is speaking figuratively here. He says in 4:9 that Jesus is the "only-begotten" of God, since God is the actual Father of Jesus in a way that he is not the actual father of believers. God is the father of believers only in a spiritual sense. Alternate translation: [God is the spiritual father of everyone who does what is right]

Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	know
righteous	what is right
know	know
righteousness	what is right
has been begotten	are the ones who have become God’s spiritual children

1 John 3

1 John 3 Introduction

1 John 3 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

1. Genuine children of God do not sin (3:1–10, continuing from 2:28)
2. Genuine believers help one another sacrificially (3:11–18)
3. Genuine believers have confidence in prayer (3:19–24)

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

"children of God"

People are sometimes described as "children of God" because God created them. However, John uses this expression in a different sense in this chapter. He uses it to describe people who have entered into a father-child relationship with God by putting their faith and trust in Jesus. God indeed created all people, but people can only become children of God in this sense by believing in Jesus. "Children" in this usage does not refer to those who are young, but only to the relationship that people have at any age to their father. (See: believe, believer, belief, unbeliever, unbelief)

Translation Issues in This Chapter

"the one who keeps his commandments remains in him, and he in him" (3:24)

This does not mean that keeping our salvation is conditional on doing certain works. Rather, John is describing the results of keeping the commandments that he describes in 3:32. Those commandments are to believe in Jesus and to love one another. John is saying that the person who believes in Jesus and loves others shows that he has a close relationship with God, and that he will continue to have that close relationship because of this obedience. Christians around the world hold different beliefs about whether people who have been saved can lose their salvation. That is not what John is addressing here, and translators should be careful not to let how they understand that issue affect how they translate this passage. (See: eternity, everlasting, eternal, forever; and save, saved, safe, salvation, rescue)

Textual Issues in This Chapter

In 3:1, the most accurate ancient manuscripts include the words "and we are." That is the reading that ULT follows. However, some other ancient manuscripts do not include these words, and so some Bibles do not have them. If a translation of the Bible already exists in your region, consider using whichever reading is found in that version. If a translation does not

already exist, we recommend that you follow the reading in the ULT text. (See: Textual Variants)

1 John 3:1

ULT	UST
See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God, and we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know him.	*Think about how much God our Father loves us! He says that we are his children. In a spiritual sense, this is completely true. That is why people who are unbelievers do not understand us. It is because they have not understood who God is, and we are like him just as children are like their parents.*

ULT **See**
UST Think about

John is using the term **See** to focus his reader's attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Consider]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the Father**
UST God our Father

Father is an important title for God. Alternate translation: [God the Father]
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **that we should be called children of God**
UST He says that we are his children

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [that God should call us his children]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **children of God**
UST his children

Here John expresses the same metaphor as in 2:29 in a slightly different way. See whether you decided to indicate the figurative meaning there. If you translate **children** using a literal term, choose a word that can refer to people of any age in relation to their father. Alternate translation: [spiritual children of God]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and we are**
UST In a spiritual sense, this is completely true

See the discussion of textual issues at the end of the introduction to this chapter to decide whether to follow the reading of ULT and include these words or to follow the reading of some other versions and not include them.
Support Reference: Textual Variants

ULT **For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know him**
UST That is why people who are unbelievers do not understand us. It is because they have not understood who God is, and we are like him just as children are like their parents

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: [Because the world did not know God, for that reason it does not know us]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know him**
UST That is why people who are unbelievers do not understand us. It is because they have not understood who God is, and we are like him just as children are like their parents

John uses **world** to mean various things in this letter. Here it refers to people who do not honor God and who do not live as God wishes. Alternate translation: [because ungodly people have not known God, for that reason they do not know us]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **does not know us … it did not know him**
UST do not understand us … they have not understood who God is, and we are like him just as children are like their parents

John is using the word **know** in two different senses. See the discussion of the word "know" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. If your language has different words for these different senses, it would be appropriate to use them in your translation. Alternate translation: [does not recognize who we are … it did not become acquainted with him]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **does not know us**
UST do … understand us … not

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly what **the world does not know** about believers in Jesus. Alternate translation: [does not recognize that we are God's children]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **him**
UST who God is, and we are like him just as children are like their parents

The pronoun **him** refers to God here. If this is not clear for your readers, you could supply this from the previous sentence. Alternate translation: [God]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
love	loves
Father	Father
called	He says that we are
God	his
world	people who are unbelievers
know	do … understand
know	they have … understood

1 John 3:2

ULT	UST
Beloved, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that whenever he appears, we will be like him because we will see him just as he is.	*Dear friends, at present we are God's spiritual children. He has not yet shown us what we will be in the future. However, we know that when Jesus comes back again, we will become like him because we will see him as he truly is.*

ULT **Beloved**
UST Dear friends

See how you translated **Beloved** in 2:7. Alternate translation: [You people whom I love] or [My dear ones]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **children of God**
UST God's spiritual children

See whether you decided to indicate the figurative meaning of this expression in 3:1. Alternate translation: [spiritual children of God]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and**

John is using the word **and** to introduce a contrast between what is **now** known about believers and what is **not yet** known. Alternate translation: [but]
Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **what we will be has not yet been revealed**
UST He has not yet shown us what we will be in the future

If your language does not use passive forms, you can use an active form and say who will do the action. Alternate translation: [God has not yet revealed what we will be]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **whenever he appears**
UST when Jesus comes back again

See the discussion of the term "appear" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. The meaning of the term in this instance seems to be the same as in 2:28. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [when Jesus returns] or [when Jesus is revealed] or [when God reveals Jesus]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **whenever he appears … him … him … he is**
UST when Jesus comes back again … him … him … he … is

The pronouns **he** and **him** likely refer to Jesus in this verse, since John speaks of **when he appears** or returns. Consider whether it might be helpful to your readers or more natural in your language to use the name "Jesus" in one or more of these instances.
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

> ULT **we will be like him because we will see him just as he is**
> UST we will become like him because we will see him as he truly is

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: [we will see him just as he is, and so we will be like him]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Beloved	Dear friends
God	God’s
know	know

1 John 3:3

ULT	UST
And everyone having this hope upon him purifies himself, just as that one is pure.	*So all those who confidently expect to see Jesus as he truly is make themselves free from sin because Jesus himself is free from sin.*

ULT **everyone having this hope upon him**
UST all those who confidently expect to see Jesus as he truly is

The pronoun **him** here does not refer to **everyone**; it refers to Jesus. The expression **this hope** refers to the hope that John describes in the previous verse, of seeing Jesus as he is. Alternate translation: [everyone who hopes to see Jesus as he really is]

Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **him … that one**
UST who confidently expect to see Jesus as he truly is … Jesus himself

These pronouns refer to Jesus. Alternate translation: [Jesus … Jesus]

Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
hope	who confidently expect to see Jesus as he truly is
purifies	make … free from sin
pure	free from sin

1 John 3:4

ULT	UST
Everyone committing sin also commits lawlessness. Indeed, sin is lawlessness.	*But everyone who continues to sin is refusing to obey God's laws, because that is what sinning is; it is refusing to obey God's laws.*

ULT **Everyone committing sin also commits lawlessness. Indeed, sin is lawlessness**
UST But everyone who continues to sin is refusing to obey God's laws, because that is what sinning is; it is refusing to obey God's laws

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **lawlessness** with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [Everyone who commits sin is also breaking God's law. Indeed, sin is breaking God's law]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **Everyone committing sin also commits lawlessness. Indeed, sin is lawlessness**
UST But everyone who continues to sin is refusing to obey God's laws, because that is what sinning is; it is refusing to obey God's laws

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain why John gives this warning. See the discussion of "sin" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. Suggested footnote: "The false teachers were saying that it does not matter what people do in their physical bodies. In this way, they were tempting the people to sin."
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
sin	sin
lawlessness	is refusing to obey God's laws
sin	sinning
lawlessness	refusing to obey God's laws

1 John 3:5

ULT	UST
And you know that that one appeared so that he might take away sins, and sin is not in him.	*You know that Jesus came in order to make us free from our sins. You know also that he himself never sinned.*

ULT that one … he might take away … him
UST Jesus … make us free from … he himself

The pronouns **that one**, **he**, and **him** refer to Jesus in this verse. Consider whether it might be helpful to your readers or more natural in your language to use the name "Jesus" in one or more of these instances.
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT that one appeared
UST Jesus came

See the discussion of the term "appear" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. Here the term seems to have an active meaning. Alternate translation: [Jesus came to earth]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT sin is not in him
UST he himself never sinned

John speaks of **sin** as if it were an object that could be inside of Jesus, although he is emphasizing that **sin** is not in Jesus. Alternate translation: [Jesus has never sinned]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	know
sins	sins
sin	sinned

1 John 3:6

ULT	UST
Everyone remaining in him does not sin. Everyone sinning has not seen him and has not known him.	*Those who share life with Jesus are the ones who do not continue sinning. But all those who continue to sin are the ones who have not understood who Jesus is and they do not really know him.*

ULT **Everyone remaining in him**
UST Those who share life with Jesus

See the discussion of the term “remain” in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. In this instance, it seems to mean the same thing as in 2:6. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [Everyone who has a close relationship with Jesus]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Everyone remaining in him**
UST Those who share life with Jesus

John is speaking as if believers could be inside of Jesus. Alternate translation: [Everyone who has a close relationship with Jesus]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **him … him … him**
UST Jesus … who Jesus is … him

The pronoun **him** refers to Jesus in this verse. Consider whether it might be helpful to your readers or more natural in your language to use the name “Jesus” in one or more of these instances.
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **does not sin**
UST are the ones who do not continue sinning

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state what this implicitly means in light of the situation that John is addressing in this letter. See the discussion of “sin” in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. John acknowledges elsewhere in this letter that genuine believers actually do sin, but they do not sin continually or wantonly. Alternate translation: [does not sin wantonly or continually]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **has not seen him and has not known him**
UST have not understood who Jesus is and they do not really know him

The words **seen** and **known** mean similar things. John is likely using repetition for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these terms into a single expression. Alternate translation: [certainly does not have a close relationship with Jesus]
Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **has not seen him**
UST have not understood who Jesus is

John is not referring to people literally seeing Jesus. Rather, he is using sight to mean perception and recognition. Alternate translation: [has not recognized who Jesus is]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
sin	sinning
sinning	sin
known	know

1 John 3:7

ULT	UST
Little children, let no one lead you astray. The one doing righteousness is righteous, just as that one is righteous.	*So I urge you who are very dear to me not to let anyone deceive you by telling you that it is all right to sin. If you continue doing what is right, that will please God, just as Jesus always does what pleases God.*

ULT **Little children**
UST So I urge you who are very dear to me

See how you translated **Little children** in 2:1. Alternate translation: [You dear believers who are under my care]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **let no one lead you astray**
UST not to let anyone deceive you by telling you that it is all right to sin

See how you translated the similar expression in 2:26. Alternate translation: [do not be deceived by anyone] or [do not let anyone get you to believe things that are not true]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **The one doing righteousness**
UST If you continue doing what is right

See how you translated the similar expression in 2:29. Alternate translation: [The one who does what is right]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **is righteous, just as that one is righteous**
UST that will please God, just as Jesus always does what pleases God

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly what the term **righteous** means in this context. Alternate translation: [is acceptable to God, just as Jesus is acceptable to God]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **that one**
UST Jesus

The demonstrative pronoun **that one** refers to Jesus. Alternate translation: [Jesus]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
let … lead … astray	deceive
righteousness	continue doing what is right
righteous	that will please God
righteous	always does what pleases God

1 John 3:8

ULT	UST
The one committing sin is from the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this reason the Son of God appeared, so that he might destroy the works of the devil.	*But anyone who continues to sin is behaving like the devil, because the devil has always been sinning, ever since the world began. The very reason that God's Son became a human being was to undo this work of the devil that kept people continually sinning.*

ULT **is from the devil**
UST is behaving like the devil

Here the preposition **from** indicates influence. The usage here is similar to that in the phrase "from the world" in 2:16. Alternate translation: [is acting under the influence of the devil]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **from the beginning**
UST ever since the world began

John uses the phrase **from the beginning** in various ways in this letter. Here it refers to the time when God created the world. In this case, the word **from** indicates not that the devil began to sin at that time, but that he had already begun to sin by that time. Alternate translation: [even before the world was created]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the Son of God**
UST God's Son

Son of God is an important title for Jesus. Alternate translation: [Jesus, the Son of God] or [God's Son Jesus]
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **appeared**
UST became a human being

See the discussion of the term "appear" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. Here the term seems to have an active meaning and to mean the same thing as in 3:5, that Jesus came to earth. It does not mean that he only appeared to come. Alternate translation: [came to earth]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **so that he might destroy the works of the devil**
UST was to undo this work of the devil that kept people continually sinning

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly what **works** John is talking about. Alternate translation: [so that he might free people from continually sinning, as the devil had influenced them to do]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
sin	sin
devil	devil
devil	devil
sinned	sinning
Son of God	God’s Son
devil	devil

1 John 3:9

ULT	UST
Everyone having been begotten from God does not commit sin, because his seed remains in him. And he is not able to sin, because he has been begotten from God.	*People do not continue sinning if they have become spiritual children of God because God has made them to be like him. They cannot continually sin, because they are God's spiritual children.*

ULT **Everyone having been begotten from God … because he has been begotten from God**
UST People … if they have become spiritual children of God … because they are God's spiritual children

See how you translated this in 2:29. Alternate translation: [Everyone whose father is God … because God is his father]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **Everyone having been begotten from God … because he has been begotten from God**
UST People … if they have become spiritual children of God … because they are God's spiritual children

See whether in 2:29 you decided to explain this metaphor. Alternate translation: [Everyone whose spiritual father is God … because God is his spiritual father]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **does not commit sin … he is not able to sin**
UST do not continue sinning … They cannot continually sin

See the discussion of the term "sin" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. The form of the verbs **commit** and **able** here may indicate a continual or habitual action. Alternate translation: [does not keep sinning … he is not able to keep sinning]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **his seed remains in him**
UST God has made them to be like him

In this phrase, **his** refers to **God** and **him** refers to the person **who has been begotten from God**. Alternate translation: [God's seed remains in such a person]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **his seed remains in him**
UST God has made them to be like him

See the discussion of the term "remain" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. In this instance, as in 2:27, it seems to refer to a continuing presence. Alternate translation: [God's seed continues to be present in such a person]
Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **his seed remains in him**
> UST God has made them to be like him

John is using the word **seed** here to represent something that God gives to every believer that marks that believer as belonging to God and empowered to live for him. It could represent: (1) the new life from God that comes from his Spirit. Alternate translation: [the new life that God gave to that person continues with him] or [the Spirit that God put within that person stays with him]; or (2) the characteristics of a father that a child inherits from him. Alternate translation: [the characteristics that show that God is his father are always part of him]

Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
having been begotten	if they have become spiritual children
God	God
sin	sinning
seed	God has made … to be like
sin	sin
he has been begotten	they are God's spiritual children
God	God's

1 John 3:10

ULT	UST
In this the children of God and the children of the devil are apparent: Everyone not doing righteousness is not from God, and the one not loving his brother.	*People who belong to God are clearly different from people who belong to the devil. Those who do not do what is right do not belong to God. Those who do not love their fellow believers also do not belong to God.*

ULT **In this the children of God and the children of the devil are apparent**
UST People who belong to God are clearly different from people who belong to the devil

In this means something similar to the idiomatic expression “in this we know” that John uses many times in this letter. The word **this** refers to what John says in the next sentence. Alternate translation: [This is how we can tell the difference between the children of God and the children of the devil]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the children of God and the children of the devil**
UST People who belong to God … from people who belong to the devil

John is using the word **children** in both of these instances. His usage is similar to the Hebrew idiom in which the “child” of something shares its characteristics. Alternate translation: [people who are living a new life in close relationship with God and people who are still in their old way of life influenced by the devil]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **Everyone not doing righteousness is not from God**
UST Those who do not do what is right do not belong to God … do not belong to God

If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this double negative. Alternate translation: [Only those who do righteousness are from God]
Support Reference: Double Negatives

ULT **Everyone not doing righteousness**
UST Those who do not do what is right

See how you translated the similar expression in 2:29. Alternate translation: [Any person who does not do what is right]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **is not from God**
UST do not belong to God … do not belong to God

The expression **from God** is an idiom. John uses it in various ways in this letter. Alternate translation: [does not belong to God] or [is not living in relationship with God]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **and the one not loving his brother**
UST Those who do not love their fellow believers also

John is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from earlier in the sentence. Alternate translation: [and the one who does not love his brother is not from God]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **his brother**
UST their fellow believers

See how you translated **his brother** in 2:9. Alternate translation: [a fellow believer]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
God	God
devil	devil
righteousness	what is right
God	God
loving	love

1 John 3:11

ULT	UST
For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another,	*You should recognize this because the message that you heard when you first believed in Jesus is that we should love each other.*

ULT **from the beginning**
UST when you first believed in Jesus

John uses the phrase **from the beginning** in various ways in this letter. Here it refers to the time when the people to whom he is writing first heard about or first believed in Jesus. See how you translated this phrase in 2:7. Alternate translation: [ever since you first heard about Jesus]

Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
love	love

1 John 3:12

ULT	UST
not like Cain—he was from the evil one and killed his brother. And on account of what did he kill him? Because his works were evil, but those of his brother, righteous.	*We should not hate others as Adam's son Cain did. He belonged to Satan, that evil being. Cain murdered his younger brother Abel. I will tell you why he did that. It was because Cain behaved in an evil way, and he hated his younger brother because his younger brother behaved in the right way.*

ULT **not like Cain**
UST We should not hate others as {Adam's son} Cain did

John is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. Alternate translation: [so we should not be like Cain]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **Cain … killed his brother**
UST Adam's son Cain … Cain murdered his {younger} brother Abel

John assumes that his readers will know that **Cain** was a son of the first man and woman, Adam and Eve. As the book of Genesis describes, Cain was jealous of his younger **brother** Abel and murdered him. If your readers might not know this, you could express this explicitly in a footnote or by putting the names of his parents and brother in the text. Alternate translation: [Cain, the son of the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, … murdered his younger brother Abel]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **he was from the evil one**
UST He belonged to {Satan,} that evil being

This is similar to the phrase "from the devil" in 3:8. See how you translated that phrase. Alternate translation: [who belonged to the evil one] or [who was influenced by the evil one]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the evil one**
UST Satan, that evil being

John is using the adjective **evil** as a noun in order to indicate a specific being. ULT adds **one** to show this. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [the one who is evil]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the evil one**
UST Satan, that evil being

John is speaking of the devil by association with the way that he is **evil**. Alternate translation: [the devil]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **And on account of what did he kill him? Because**
UST I will tell you why he did that. It was because

John is using a question as a teaching tool. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement. Alternate translation: [He killed him because]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **but those of his brother, righteous**
UST and {he hated his younger brother because} his younger brother behaved in the right way

John is leaving out a word, “were,” that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. The word “were” can be supplied for clarity. Alternate translation: [but his brother’s works were righteous]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Cain	Cain
evil one	Satan
evil	evil
righteous	in the right way

1 John 3:13

ULT	UST
Do not be amazed, brothers, if the world hates you.	*Therefore, my fellow believers, you should not be amazed when unbelievers hate you.*

ULT **Do not be amazed**
UST Therefore … you should not be amazed

If it would be helpful in your language, you could show the connection between this sentence and the previous one by using a connecting word like “so” or “therefore.” Using the example of Cain, John shows that evil people naturally hate righteous people. Alternate translation: [So do not be surprised]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **brothers**
UST my fellow believers

See how you translated **brothers** in 2:9. Alternate translation: [my friends]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **if the world hates you**
UST when unbelievers hate you

John uses **world** to mean various things in this letter. Here it refers to people who do not honor God and who do not live as God wishes, as in 3:1. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [if ungodly people hate you]
Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
world	unbelievers

1 John 3:14

ULT	UST
We know that we have relocated from death into life, because we love the brothers. The one not loving remains in death.	*We love our fellow believers, and this assures us that God has made us spiritually alive. But if someone does not love other believers, then that person is still spiritually dead.*

ULT **We know that we have relocated from death into life, because we love the brothers**
UST We love our fellow believers, and this assures us that God has made us spiritually alive

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: [Because we love the brothers, we know that we have relocated from death into life]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **we have relocated from death into life**
UST God has made us spiritually alive

John is speaking of the conditions of being dead and alive as if they were physical locations between which a person could move. Alternate translation: [we are no longer dead but have become alive]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **we have relocated from death into life**
UST God has made us spiritually alive

Since John and his readers were not literally dead, he is referring to spiritual **death** and to spiritual **life**. Alternate translation: [we are no longer dead spiritually but have become alive spiritually]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the brothers**
UST our fellow believers

See how you translated **the brothers** in 2:9. Alternate translation: [the other believers]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **The one not loving**
UST But if someone does not love other believers

John does not say specifically whom such a person **does not love**. In context, it appears that he means other believers. But it is also possible that John means other people in general. Alternate translation: [The one who does not love his fellow believers] or [The one who does not love other people]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

> ULT **remains in death**
> UST then that person is still spiritually dead

See the discussion of the term “remain” in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. In this instance, it means staying in the same place. John is once again speaking of the state of **death** as if it were a location. Alternate translation: [remains dead spiritually]

Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	and this assures us
love	love
loving	love

1 John 3:15

ULT	UST
Everyone hating his brother is a murderer, and you know that every murderer does not have eternal life remaining in him.	*Anyone who hates one of his fellow believers is doing something just as bad as murdering him. And you know that someone who murders another person is not living in the new way that God enables us to live.*

ULT **Everyone hating his brother is a murderer**
UST Anyone who hates one of his fellow believers is doing something just as bad as murdering him

John is using the term **murderer**, and he is echoing the teaching of Jesus that is recorded in Matthew 5:21–22. John means that since people commit murder because they hate other people, anyone who hates is the same on the inside as someone who actually kills another person. It may be helpful to translate this metaphor as a simile. Alternate translation: [Whoever hates another believer is just like someone who kills a person]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **his brother**
UST one of his fellow believers

See how you translated **his brother** in 2:9. Alternate translation: [a fellow believer]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **every murderer does not have eternal life**
UST someone who murders another person is not living in the new way that God enables us to live

If it would be helpful in your language, you could make the subject negative and the verb positive. Alternate translation: [no murderer has eternal life]
Support Reference: Double Negatives

ULT **eternal life**
UST the new way that God enables us to live

Since John is speaking of a present reality, by **eternal life** he does not mean living forever in the presence of God after death, which is one thing that this expression can describe. Rather, he means the regenerating power that God gives to believers in this life that helps them to stop sinning and to do what pleases him. Clearly, anyone who is a **murderer** does not have this power at work in him. Alternate translation: [the power that God gives to help us become new people]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **does not have eternal life remaining in him**
UST is not living in the new way that God enables us to live

See the discussion of the term “remain” in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. In this instance, John seems to be using the term literally, in the sense of “residing,” to depict **eternal life** as if it were a living thing that could actively reside within a person. Alternate translation: [has not received eternal life]
Support Reference: Personification

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	know
eternal	the new way that God enables us to live

1 John 3:16

ULT	UST
In this we have known love, that that one laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.	*Jesus taught us how to truly love each other when he willingly died for us. For our part, we should also be willing to do anything for our fellow believers, even die for them.*

ULT **In this we have known love**
UST taught us how to truly love each other

In this we have known means something similar to the idiomatic expression “in this we know” that John uses many times in this letter. Alternate translation: [This is how we have come to understand what love is]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **that one**
UST Jesus … he

The demonstrative pronoun **that one** refers to Jesus. Alternate translation: [Jesus]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **laid down his life for us**
UST willingly died for us

This is an idiom that means “died willingly for us.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [willingly gave his life for us] or [sacrificed himself for us]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **And we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers**
UST For our part, we should also be willing to do anything for our fellow believers, even die for them

John is not saying that we should seek out ways to die for our fellow believers in a literal sense, but that we should be prepared to do so, if necessary. However, he is also using the expression **lay down our lives** to mean that we should seek ways to love our fellow believers in sacrificial ways, as he illustrates in the next verse.
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the brothers**
UST our fellow believers

See how you translated **the brothers** in 2:9. Alternate translation: [our fellow believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
known	taught us
love	love

1 John 3:17

ULT	UST
But whoever has the possessions of the world and sees his brother having need and closes his entrails from him, how does the love of God remain in him?	*Many of us have the things that are necessary for life in this world. But suppose that we become aware that a fellow believer does not have what he needs. Suppose also that we refuse to provide for him. Then we are not loving him the way that God taught us to love people.*

ULT **whoever has the possessions of the world**
UST Many of us have the things that are necessary for life in this world

John uses this expression to introduce a hypothetical situation, which he discusses over the course of the whole verse. He is not talking about any specific person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could restate this as in the UST.
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **the possessions of the world**
UST the things that are necessary for life in this world

In this letter, John uses **world** to mean various things. Here it refers to the created world, and so refers to material things such as, in this context, money, food, and clothing. Alternate translation: [material possessions]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **his brother**
UST a fellow believer

See how you translated **his brother** in 2:9. Alternate translation: [one of our fellow believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **closes his entrails from him**
UST we refuse to provide for him

This is an idiom in which the **entrails** or internal organs represent the emotions that would lead a person to act generously. Your language may have an equivalent figurative expression that you could use. You could also express the plain meaning in your translation. Alternate translation: [closes his heart to him] or [refuses to have compassion on him] or [declines to help him]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **how does the love of God remain in him**
UST Then we are not loving him the way that God taught us to love people

John is using the question form as a teaching tool. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement or exclamation. Alternate translation: [the love of God does not remain in such a person!]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **how does the love of God remain in him**
UST Then we are not loving him the way that God taught us to love people

See the discussion of the term “remain” in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. As in 2:14, here the word seems to describe behavior that is recognized to be genuine because it is consistent. Alternate translation: [such a person does not genuinely love others with love that is from God!]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **how does the love of God remain in him**
UST Then we are not loving him the way that God taught us to love people

As in 2:5, the phrase **the love of God** could mean: (1) God loving people. Alternate translation: [Is love from God really working in him]; or (2) a person loving God. Alternate translation: [is it really possible that he truly loves God] We recommend option (1) if you must choose. But it is probable that John intends both meanings here, so if your translation can leave the possibilities open, that would be best. Alternate translation: [is he really loving others the way that God loves him]

Support Reference: Possession

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
world	world
love	loving
God	God

1 John 3:18

ULT	UST
Little children, let us not love in word nor in tongue, but in deed and truth.	*You who are as dear to me as though you were my own children, let us not merely say that we love each other. Let us love each other genuinely by helping each other.*

ULT **Little children**
UST You who are as dear to me as though you were my own children

See how you translated **Little children** in 2:1. Alternate translation: [You dear believers who are under my care]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **let us not love in word nor in tongue**
UST let us not {merely} say that we love each other

The phrases **in word** and **in tongue** mean similar things. John is likely using repetition for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these terms into a single expression. Alternate translation: [let us not love only by what we say]
Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **let us not love in word nor in tongue**
UST let us not {merely} say that we love each other

John is using the phrases **in word** and **in tongue** to refer to what a person says. Alternate translation: [let us not love only by what we say]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **let us not love in word nor in tongue**
UST let us not {merely} say that we love each other

John is not saying that we should never express love through words. He is using hyperbole to make a contrast between words and actions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could include a word such as “only” or “merely.” Alternate translation: [let us not love only by what we say]
Support Reference: Hyperbole

ULT **let us not love in word nor in tongue**
UST let us not {merely} say that we love each other

If it would be clearer in your language, you could put the negative **not** before **in word**, rather than before **love**. Alternate translation: [let us love not in word nor in tongue]
Support Reference: Information Structure

ULT **but in deed and truth**
UST Let us love {each other} genuinely by helping each other

John is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from earlier in the sentence. Alternate translation: [but let us love in deed and in truth]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

> ULT **in deed and truth**
> UST genuinely by helping each other

John is expressing a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **truth** indicates the quality that loving **in deed** would have. Alternate translation: [truly, in actions]
Support Reference: Hendiadys

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
love	love
tongue	let us … merely say that

1 John 3:19

ULT	UST
In this we will know that we are from the truth, and we will persuade our hearts before him,	

ULT **In this we will know … and we will persuade our hearts**
UST By doing that, we can know … we may feel that we do not belong to God because of our sins. When that happens, we can reassure ourselves that we truly do belong to him … than … feelings and

John describes a result in this verse. He gives the reason for that result in the next verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could put the reason before the result by creating a verse bridge. You could put 3:20 first in your translation, making it a separate sentence and leaving out both instances of the word "that." You could put this verse next, translating it as in the following suggestions. Alternate translation: [That is how we can know … and how we can persuade our hearts]
Support Reference: Verse Bridges

ULT **In this**
UST By doing that

In this could refer either to: (1) What John has just said in verse 18. Alternate translation: [If we do that]; or (2) What John is about to say in verse 20. Alternate translation: [I will tell you how]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **In this we will know**
UST By doing that, we can know

This is an idiomatic expression that John uses many times in this letter. Alternate translation: [This is how we can know]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **we will know that we are from the truth, and we will persuade our hearts**
UST we can know that we belong to God, who is the source of everything that is true … we may feel that we do not belong to God because of our sins. When that happens, we can reassure ourselves that we truly do belong to him … than … feelings and

The phrases **we will know** and **we will persuade our hearts** mean similar things. John is likely using the repetition for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases into an emphatic expression. Alternate translation: [we will be completely convinced that we are from the truth]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **we are from the truth**
UST we belong to God, who is the source of everything that is true … than … feelings

This could mean one of two things: (1) John could be referring to God by association with the way that God is true. In other words, God always tells **the truth** and does what he says. Alternate translation: [we are from God, who is true]; or (2) As in 2:21, the word **truth** could refer to the true teaching that believers have received from Jesus. Alternate translation: [we are conducting our lives according to the true message]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **we are from the truth**
UST we belong to God, who is the source of everything that is true … than … feelings

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **truth** with an adjective such as "true." Alternate translation: [we are from the One who is true]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **we are from the truth**
UST we belong to God, who is the source of everything that is true … than … feelings

See how you translated the expression in 3:10 that has a similar meaning. Alternate translation: [we belong to God] or [we are living in relationship with God]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **we will persuade our hearts**
UST we may feel that we do not belong to God because of our sins. When that happens, we can reassure ourselves that we truly do belong to him … than … feelings

John is speaking of **hearts** to mean thoughts and feelings. There may be a similar expression in your language. Alternate translation: [we can reassure ourselves about this]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **before him**
UST When we are in God's presence

The pronoun **him** refers to God. Alternate translation: [before God]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **before him**
UST When we are in God's presence

The word **before** means "in front of" or "in the presence of" someone. It likely refers to when we pray to God or are otherwise aware that he sees everything that we do. Alternate translation: [when we pray to God]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	know

1 John 3:20

ULT	UST
that if our heart condemns us, that God is greater than our heart and knows everything.	

ULT **that if our heart condemns {us}, that God is greater than our heart and knows everything**

UST we may feel that we do not belong to God because of our sins … This is because God is more trustworthy … our … he knows everything about us, including that we have trusted in him

John is discussing a hypothetical situation in order to reassure his readers. Alternate translation: [Suppose our heart condemns us. Then we should remember that God is greater than our heart and knows everything]

Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **if our heart condemns us**

UST we may feel that we do not belong to God because of our sins … our

John continues speaking of the **heart** to mean the thoughts and feelings. There may be a similar expression in your language. Alternate translation: [if our feelings condemn us] or [if our thoughts accuse us]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **if our heart condemns us**

UST we may feel that we do not belong to God because of our sins … our

The topic here, continuing from 3:19, is how we can know that "we are from the truth," so this is likely a reference to needing reassurance about that. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [if we ever feel that we do not belong to God]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **our heart … our heart**

UST we may feel that we do not belong to God because of our sins … our

If it would be unusual in your language to speak of one **heart** in reference to many people, and if you decide to retain the word **heart** as a metaphor in your translation, you could make it plural. Alternate translation: [our hearts … our hearts]

Support Reference: Possession

ULT **God is greater than our heart and knows everything**

UST God is more trustworthy … he knows everything about us, including that we have trusted in him

Since John is using the **heart** to mean the thoughts and feelings, the statement that **God is greater than our heart** likely means that God knows and understands more than we do and that God has greater compassion for us than we have for ourselves. In that case, the phrases **is greater than our heart** and **knows everything** would mean similar things. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases into an emphatic expression. Alternate translation: [God certainly knows better than we do that we belong to him]

Support Reference: Parallelism

> ULT **God is greater than our heart and knows everything**
> UST God is more trustworthy … he knows everything about us, including that we have trusted in him

The implications are that, given God's greater knowledge, we should believe what he has said rather than what our thoughts and feelings are saying. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [God certainly knows better than we do that we belong to him, and so we should believe that because he has said so]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
condemns	we may feel that we do not belong to God because of our sins
God	God
knows	knows

1 John 3:21

ULT	UST
Beloved, if the heart does not condemn, we have confidence toward God	*Dear friends, when we feel that God does not condemn us for having sinned, then we can pray confidently to God.*

ULT **Beloved**
UST Dear friends

See how you translated **Beloved** in 2:7. Alternate translation: [You people whom I love]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **if the heart does not condemn, we have confidence toward God**
UST when we feel that God does not condemn us {for having sinned}, then we can pray confidently to God

John discusses another hypothetical situation in order to reassure his readers. Alternate translation: [Suppose our hearts do not condemn us. Then we have confidence toward God]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **if the heart does not condemn**
UST when we feel that God does not condemn us for having sinned

See how you translated the similar expression in 3:20. Alternate translation: [if we do not feel that we do not belong to God] or, positively, [if we feel assured that we belong to God]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the heart**
UST we feel that

If you decided in the previous verse to retain the word **heart** as a metaphor in your translation and you made it plural there, you could make it plural in this instance as well. You can also use the same possessive pronoun as in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [our hearts]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **we have confidence toward God**
UST then we can pray confidently to God

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly what this **confidence** applies to, in light of what John says in the next verse. Alternate translation: [we can pray to God confidently]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **we have confidence toward God**
UST then we can pray confidently to God

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **confidence** with an adverb such as “confidently.” Alternate translation: [we can pray to God confidently]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Beloved	Dear friends
condemn	condemn
God	God

1 John 3:22

ULT	UST
and whatever we ask, we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and we do the pleasing things before him.	*We find that when we pray confidently to God and ask for something, he gives it to us. We pray confidently like this because as people who belong to him, we do what he commands us to do, and we do what pleases him.*

ULT **because we keep his commandments and we do the pleasing things before him**
UST We pray confidently like this because {as people who belong to him,} we do what he commands us to do, and we do what pleases him

John is not saying that we **receive whatever we ask** in return for obeying God's commandments and doing what pleases him. Our obedience does not obligate God to give us what we ask for. Our obedience is simply what God has a right to expect from us. Rather, the word **because** reaches back to the statement earlier in this sentence, in the previous verse, that "we have confidence toward God," that is, we can pray to God confidently. Living in obedience and doing what pleases God gives us confidence to ask for things according to his will. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this explicitly by starting a new sentence here that refers back to that statement and explains how John's statement in this verse relates to it. Alternate translation: [We can pray confidently like this because we obey God's commandments and do what pleases him, and that assures us that we belong to him]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **we keep his commandments**
UST as people who belong to him, we do what he commands us to do

As in 2:3, the word **keep** is an idiom that means "obey." Alternate translation: [we obey his commandments]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the pleasing things before him**
UST what pleases him

John is using the adjective **pleasing** as a noun. ULT adds **things** to show this. (The word is plural.) Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [the things that please him]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the pleasing things before him**
UST what pleases him

The word **before** means "in front of" or "in the presence of" another person. In this case, **before him** indicates "in God's sight." Seeing, for its part, represents attention and judgment. So this means the things that God regards as pleasing. Alternate translation: [the things that please him] or [what God considers to be good]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
receive	gives it to us

1 John 3:23

ULT	UST
And this is his commandment: that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another just as he gave us a commandment.	*I will tell you what God commands us to do. We must trust in his Son, Jesus the Messiah. We must also love each other just as Jesus commanded us to do.*

ULT **this is his commandment**
UST I will tell you what God commands us to do

The pronoun **his** refers to God in this verse. Alternate translation: [this is what God has commanded]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **in the name of his Son Jesus Christ**
UST in his Son, Jesus the Messiah

As in 2:12, John is using the **name** of Jesus to represent who Jesus is and what he has done. Alternate translation: [in Jesus Christ his Son and what he has done for us]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **of … Son**
UST in … Son

Son is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **he gave**
UST Jesus commanded … to do

The pronoun **he** here may refer to: (1) Jesus or (2) God.
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
believe	We must trust
of … Son	in … Son
Jesus	Jesus
Christ	Messiah
love	love

1 John 3:24

ULT	UST
And the one keeping his commandments remains in him, and he in him. And in this we know that he remains in us, from the Spirit whom he gave to us.	*The people who do what God commands share life with God, and God shares life with them. I will tell you how we can be sure that God is sharing life with us. We can be sure of that because we have God's Spirit, whom he gave to us.*

ULT **the one keeping his commandments remains in him**
UST The people who do what God commands share life with God … shares life

The pronouns **his** and **him** here refer to God. Alternate translation: [the one who keeps God's commandments remains in God]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the one keeping his commandments**
UST The people who do what God commands

The word **keep** is an idiom that means "obey." Alternate translation: [the person who obeys God's commandments]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **remains in him**
UST share life with God … shares life

See the discussion of the term "remain" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. In this instance, it seems to mean the same thing as in 2:6. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [continues to have a close relationship with him]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **remains in him**
UST share life with God … shares life

John is speaking as if believers could be inside of God. Alternate translation: [continues to have a close relationship with God]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and he in him**
UST and God … with them

John is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from earlier in the sentence. Alternate translation: [and God remains in him]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **and he in him**
UST and God … with them

John is speaking as if God could be inside of believers. Alternate translation: [and God continues to have a close relationship with that person]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and he in him**
UST and God … with them

Although the term **him** here is masculine, John is using the word in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: [and God continues to have a close relationship with that person]
Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **in this we know that**
UST I will tell you how we can be sure that

This is an idiomatic expression that John uses many times in this letter. Alternate translation: [this is how we know that]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **he remains in us**
UST is sharing life with … God … us

See the discussion of the term "remain" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. In this instance, it seems to mean the same thing as it does earlier in the verse. Alternate translation: [he continues to have a close relationship with us]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	we can be sure
Spirit	Spirit

1 John 4

1 John 4 Introduction

1 John 4 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

1. It is false teaching to deny that Jesus became human (4:1–6)
2. Genuine believers love one another as God has loved them (4:7–21)

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

"Spirit" and "spirit"

John uses the word "spirit" in different ways in this chapter.

Sometimes the word "spirit" clearly refers to a supernatural being. Sometimes the word "spirit" may refer either to the human spirit, to the character of something, or to a supernatural being. Therefore, the expressions "the spirit of the antichrist," "the spirit of truth," and "the spirit of error" may refer to the spirit of the humans who promote those things, the attitudes and thinking that are typical of those things, or to spiritual beings who inspire those things.

When the word is written with a capital letter, as in the expressions "the Spirit of God" and "his Spirit," it refers to the Holy Spirit.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Loving God

If people love God, they should show it in the way that they live and the way that they treat other people. Doing this may assure us that God has saved us and that we belong to him. But loving others does not save us. Be sure that this is clear in your translation. John says in 4:7 that "everyone who loves is begotten from God and knows God." As the notes explain, this means that God is the spiritual father of everyone who loves, and everyone who loves is in a close relationship with God. But this love from God is a sign that they belong to God only because of what Jesus did for them on the cross, as John says in 4:10. They were saved by what Jesus did, not because they themselves loved others. (See: save, saved, safe, salvation, rescue)

Textual Issues in This Chapter

In 4:3, the most accurate ancient manuscripts say "acknowledge Jesus." That is the reading that ULT follows. Some other ancient manuscripts say "acknowledge Jesus Christ having come in the flesh." (Some of these manuscripts say "Jesus" or "the Lord Jesus" instead of "Jesus Christ.") If a translation of the Bible already exists in your region, consider using whichever

reading is found in that version. If a translation does not already exist, we recommend that you follow the reading in the ULT text. (See: Textual Variants)

1 John 4:1

ULT	UST
Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.	*Dear friends, there are many people who have a false message, and they are going around teaching it to others. So do not trust every teacher. Instead, think carefully about what each teacher says and decide whether it came from God's Spirit or from a different spirit.*

ULT **Beloved**
UST Dear friends

See how you translated **Beloved** in 2:7. Alternate translation: [You people whom I love]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits**
UST So do not trust every teacher. Instead, think carefully about what each teacher says and decide

John is speaking of a prophet by association with the **spirit** that would inspire a prophet to speak. Alternate translation: [do not believe every prophet; instead, consider carefully what prophets say]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **whether they are from God**
UST whether it came from God's Spirit or from a different spirit

John uses the expression **from God** in various ways in this letter. Here it refers to origin. Alternate translation: [in order to determine whether God has sent them] or [in order to determine whether God is inspiring them]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **whether they are from God**
UST whether it came from God's Spirit or from a different spirit

This sentence leaves out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If it would be helpful in your language, you could supply these words. Alternate translation: [to see whether they are from God or whether they are not from God]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **have gone out into the world**
UST and they are going around teaching it to others

John uses **world** to mean various things in this letter. Here it refers to the people living in the world. Alternate translation: [are out there speaking to people]
Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Beloved	Dear friends
believe	So do not trust every teacher
spirit	So do not trust every teacher
test	think carefully about what each teacher says and decide
spirits	think carefully about what each teacher says and decide
God	God’s
false prophets	people who have a false message
world	and they are going around teaching it to others

1 John 4:2

ULT	UST
In this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses Jesus Christ having come in the flesh is from God,	*I will tell you how to know if someone is teaching truth that comes from the Spirit of God or if he is not. Those who affirm that Jesus the Messiah came from God and became a human like us are teaching a message that is from God.*

ULT **In this you know**
UST I will tell you how to know if someone is teaching truth that comes from … or if he is not

This is an idiomatic expression that John uses many times in this letter. Alternate translation: [This is how you can recognize]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **Every spirit that confesses**
UST Those who affirm that

John is speaking of a prophet by association with the **spirit** that would inspire a prophet to speak. Alternate translation: [Every prophet who teaches]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **Jesus Christ having come in the flesh**
UST Jesus the Messiah came from God and became a human like us

As in 2:16, John is using the term **flesh** to mean the physical human body, which is made of **flesh**. See Part 2 of the Introduction to 1 John for an explanation of why the false teachers denied that Jesus had a human body. Alternate translation: [that Jesus Christ had a real human body]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **is from God**
UST are teaching a message that is from God

See how you translated this expression in 4:1. Alternate translation: [is inspired by God] or, if your language does not use passive forms, [God is inspiring,] placing that phrase before “every spirit” or “every prophet.”
Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	know
Spirit	Spirit
spirit	Those
God	God
confesses	affirm that
Jesus	Jesus
Christ	Messiah
God	God

1 John 4:3

ULT	UST
and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. And this is that of the antichrist, which you have heard about, that it is coming, and it is now already in the world.	*But those who do not affirm that Jesus became a real human being are not teaching a message from God. They are teachers who oppose the Messiah. You have heard that people like that will be coming among us. Even now they are already here.*

ULT **every spirit that does not confess**
UST those who do not affirm that

See how you translated the similar expression in 4:2. Alternate translation: [every prophet who does not teach]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **Jesus**
UST Jesus became a real human being

See the discussion of textual issues at the end of the introduction to this chapter to decide whether to follow the reading of ULT and say **Jesus** here or to follow the reading of some other manuscripts and say "Jesus Christ having come in the flesh."
Support Reference: Textual Variants

ULT **Jesus**
UST Jesus became a real human being

If you follow the variant reading "Jesus Christ having come in the flesh," see how you translated that expression in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [that Jesus Christ had a real human body]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **Jesus**
UST Jesus became a real human being

Even if you do not follow the reading of the textual variant here, you may wish to explain more fully what John means by **Jesus** in this context in order to make the implied information explicit for your readers. Alternate translation: [that Jesus Christ had a real human body]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **is not from God**
UST are not teaching a message from God

See how you translated the similar expression in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [is not inspired by God] or, if your language does not use passive forms, [God is not inspiring] placing that phrase before "every spirit" or "every prophet."
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **this is that of the antichrist**
UST They are teachers who oppose the Messiah

The word **this** refers to **every spirit that does not confess Jesus** in the previous sentence and the word **that** here is a shorter way to say "the one" or "the spirit." Alternate translation: [every spirit that does not confess Jesus is the spirit of the antichrist]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **this is that of the antichrist**
UST They are teachers who oppose the Messiah

Since that the word **that** means "the spirit," see the discussion of the word "spirit" in the introduction to this chapter. In this instance, John is referring to either: (1) the characteristic attitude of something, or (2) a supernatural being who inspires that attitude. Also see how you translated the term **antichrist** in 2:18. Alternate translation: [this is the false teaching that is opposed to Jesus]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **which you have heard about, that it is coming, and it is now already in the world**
UST You have heard that people like that will be coming {among us}. Even now they are already here

The word **which** refers to the **spirit** of **the antichrist**, which was **already in the world** at the time when John wrote. It does not refer to **the antichrist** himself, who was not yet **in the world**. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: [You have heard that this false teaching is coming, and it is now already circulating among people]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **in the world**
UST here

John uses **world** to mean various things in this letter. Here, while it could possibly mean the literal earth (so this expression would mean "on this earth"), it more likely refers to the people living in the world. Alternate translation: [circulating among people]
Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
spirit	those
confess	do … affirm that
Jesus	Jesus
God	God
antichrist	teachers who oppose the Messiah
world	here

1 John 4:4

ULT	UST
You are from God, little children, and you have overcome them because greater is the one in you than the one in the world.	*As for you who are as dear to me as though you were my own children, you belong to God, and you have rejected what those people teach. You have done this because God, who enables you to do what he wants, is more powerful than the devil, who motivates everyone who does not honor God.*

ULT **You are from God**
UST As for you … you belong to God

The expression **from God** means something different in this verse than in the previous three verses, since it refers to believers rather than to the spirits that are inspiring prophets. It means the same thing as in 3:10. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [You belong to God] or [You are living in relationship with God]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **little children**
UST who are as dear to me as though you were my own children

See how you translated **little children** in 2:1. Alternate translation: [you dear believers who are under my care]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **you have overcome them**
UST you have rejected what those people teach

As in 2:13 and 2:14, John is using the word **overcome**. He is speaking of the believers' refusal to believe the false prophets as if the believers had defeated these prophets in a struggle. Alternate translation: [you have refused to believe these false teachers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **them**
UST what those people teach

The pronoun **them** refers to the false prophets whom John describes in 4:1. Alternate translation: [these false teachers]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **greater is the one in you**
UST God, who enables you to do what he wants, is more powerful

As in 3:24, John is speaking as if God could be inside of believers. Alternate translation: [God, with whom you have a close relationship, is greater]
Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **the one in the world**
> UST the devil, who motivates everyone who does not honor God

The phrase **in the world** here and in 4:5 seems to have a different meaning than in 4:1 and 4:3. There, it refers to location, so when John says in 4:3 that the spirit of the antichrist is "in the world," it means "on this earth" or "circulating among people." But here, John seems to be using the term **world** to mean the value system that is opposed to God. In that case, the phrase **the one in the world** would refer to the devil by association with the way that he inspires that system. Alternate translation: [the devil]

Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
God	God
world	the devil, who motivates everyone who does not honor God

1 John 4:5

ULT	UST
They are from the world. Because of this, they speak from the world, and the world listens to them.	*As for those people who are teaching what is false, they think and live in ways that do not honor God. That is why what they say also does not honor God, and that is why other people who do not honor God believe what they say.*

ULT **They are from the world. Because of this, they speak from the world**
UST As for those people who are teaching what is false, they think and live in ways that do not honor God. That is why what they say also does not honor God … that is why

John uses **world** to mean various things in this letter. Here in these first two instances, it refers to the system of values shared by people who do not know God. Alternate translation: [These false teachers are influenced by the ungodly value system of the people who do not honor God. As a result, they express the perspectives of that system]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **They**
UST As for those people who are teaching what is false

The pronoun **They** refers to the false prophets whom John describes in 4:1. Alternate translation: [These false teachers]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the world listens to them**
UST other people who do not honor God believe what they say

In this instance, the term **world** refers to people who share the world's value system. That is, they do not honor or obey God. Alternate translation: [ungodly people listen to them]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the world listens to them**
UST other people who do not honor God believe what they say

The word **listens** is an idiom that means "believes" or "is persuaded by." Alternate translation: [ungodly people believe them]
Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
world	they think and live in ways that do not honor God
world	what they say also does not honor God
world	other people who do not honor God

1 John 4:6

ULT	UST
We are from God. The one knowing God listens to us. Whoever is not from God does not listen to us. From this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.	*As for us, God has sent us. Whoever truly knows God believes and obeys what we teach. Whoever does not belong to God does not believe or obey what we teach. By observing who believes us and who does not, we are able to distinguish between people who teach true messages from God's Spirit and people who teach false messages that are from the devil.*

ULT **We … to us … to us**
UST As for us … what we teach … what we teach

The pronouns **We** and **us** in the first three sentences of this verse are probably exclusive, and so if your language marks that distinction, we recommend using the exclusive form in your translation. John appears to be speaking here of himself and his fellow eyewitnesses of the resurrection as teachers of the truth about Jesus. He has already said that the believers to whom he is writing are from God in 4:4.

Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

ULT **We are from God**
UST As for us, God has sent us

Here, **from God** could mean: (1) that John and his fellow eyewitnesses teach the truth about Jesus because God has sent them to do that. Alternate translation: [God has sent us]; or (2) the same thing as it does in 4:4 and in 4:1–3. Alternate translation: [We belong to God]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **We are from God**
UST As for us, God has sent us

If you have decided that **We are from God** means "God has sent us," and if it would be helpful to your readers, either here or in a footnote you could state explicitly what God has sent John and the other eyewitnesses to do. Alternate translation: [God has sent us to teach the truth about Jesus as eyewitnesses to his life on earth]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **The one knowing God**
UST Whoever truly knows God

As in 2:3–4, John is using the word **knowing** in a specific sense. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [Anyone who has a close relationship with God]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **listens to us … does not listen to us**
UST believes and obeys what we teach … does not believe or obey what we teach

As in 4:5, the word **listens** is an idiom that means "believes" or "is persuaded by." Alternate translation: [believes what we teach … does not believe what we teach]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **Whoever is not from God**
UST Whoever does not belong to God

The expression **from God** means the same thing in this verse as in 4:4. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [Whoever does not belong to God] or [Whoever is not living in relationship with God]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **From this we know**
UST By observing who believes us and who does not, we are able to distinguish between

This is an idiomatic expression. It means the same thing as the expression "in this we know" which John uses several times in this letter. Alternate translation: [This is how we can recognize]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **From this we know**
UST By observing who believes us and who does not, we are able to distinguish between

Here, **this** refers back to what John has just written in the previous two sentences. We can know if someone is teaching a true message if it agrees with what John and the other apostles teach, and that it is a false message if it does not. John may have intended for **this** to also include what he said in 4:2–3.
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **we know**
UST we are able to distinguish between

In the last sentence of this verse, John is once again speaking of himself and the believers to whom he is writing. If your language has an inclusive form of **we**, then use that in your translation here. This inclusive usage continues through 4:13.
Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

ULT **the spirit of truth and the spirit of error**
UST people who teach true messages from God's Spirit and people who teach false messages that are from the devil

See the discussion of the word **spirit** in the introduction to this chapter. In these instances, the word may refer to: (1) spirits that inspire messages of a certain kind. In this case, **the spirit of truth** would refer to God's Spirit, and **the spirit of error** would refer to the devil. These would also be what John refers to as "the one in you" and "the one in the world" in 4:4. See the UST. (2) the character of something. In this case, John would be using **spirit** to refer to people whose teaching has a certain character. Alternate translation: [whose teaching is true and whose teaching is false]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the spirit of truth and the spirit of error**
UST people who teach true messages from God's Spirit and people who teach false messages that are from the devil

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract nouns **truth** and **error** with the adjectives "true" and "false." Alternate translation: [the spirit whose messages are true and the spirit whose messages are false]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
God	God
knowing	knows
God	God
God	God
know	distinguish
spirit	Spirit
spirit	that are from the devil
of error	people who teach false messages

1 John 4:7

ULT	UST
Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and everyone loving has been begotten from God and knows God.	*Dear friends, we must love each other. This is what God wants for us, and it is because he loves us that we can love others. Those who love their fellow believers have become God's spiritual children and know God well.*

ULT **Beloved**
UST Dear friends

See how you translated **Beloved** in 2:7. Alternate translation: [You people whom I love]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **love is from God**
UST This is what God wants for us, and it is because he loves {us} that we can love others

The expression **from God** means something similar to what it does in 4:1–3. Alternate translation: [God inspires us to love]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **everyone loving has been begotten from God**
UST Those who love {their fellow believers} have become God's spiritual children

See how you translated this metaphor in 2:29 and 3:9. Alternate translation: [God is the spiritual father of everyone who loves]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **everyone loving has been begotten from God**
UST Those who love {their fellow believers} have become God's spiritual children

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [God is the father of everyone who loves]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **and knows God**
UST and know God well

As in 2:4, John is using the word **knows** in a specific sense. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [and such a person has a close relationship with God]
Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Beloved	Dear friends
love	love
love	loves
God	God
loving	love
has been begotten	have become God’s spiritual children
God	God’s
knows	know
God	God

1 John 4:8

ULT	UST
The one not loving does not know God, for God is love.	*God's character is to love people. So whoever does not love others does not truly know God.*

ULT **The one not loving does not know God, for God is love**
UST God's character is to love {people}. So whoever does not love {others} does not truly know God

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: [Since God is love, the one who does not love does not know God]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **does not know God**
UST does not truly know God

As in 2:4, John is using the word **know** in a specific sense. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [does not have a close relationship with God]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **God is love**
UST God's character is to love people

This is a metaphor that describes what God is like in his character. Alternate translation: [God is entirely loving]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **God is love**
UST God's character is to love people

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **love** with an adjective such as "loving." Alternate translation: [God is entirely loving]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
loving	love
know	know
God	God
God	God's
love	love

1 John 4:9

ULT	UST
In this the love of God appeared among us, that God sent his Son, the One and Only, into the world so that we might live through him.	*I will tell you how God has shown us that he loves us. He sent his only Son to this earth so that his Son would enable us to live eternally because of what he did for us.*

ULT **In this**
UST I will tell you how

In this means something similar to the idiomatic expression “in this we know” that John uses many times in this letter. Alternate translation: [This is how]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **In this**
UST I will tell you how

Here, **this** refers forward to what John will say in the rest of the sentence. God demonstrated that he loves us by sending his Son.
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the love of God appeared among us**
UST God has shown us that he loves us

See the discussion of the term “appear” in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. This verbal form could be translated **appeared** or “was revealed.” If your language does not use passive forms, you can use an active form and say who did the action. Alternate translation: [God showed us how much he loves us]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **the love of God**
UST God … that he loves us

Here, **the love of God** refers to God loving people. Alternate translation: [God’s love for us]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **among us**
UST us

The expression **among us** likely refers to all of humanity, not just to the people who saw and heard Jesus when he was alive, so this would be an inclusive use of the term **us** that would include the believers to whom John is writing. John says later in the sentence that Jesus came **so that we might live through him**, and **we** in that instance does include these believers. So it is likely that **us** earlier in the sentence includes them as well.
Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’

ULT **his Son**
UST his … Son

Son is an important title for Jesus. Alternate translation: [his Son Jesus]
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **the One and Only**
UST only

The adjectives **One and Only** function here as nouns to mean that God has no other Son like Jesus. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could add the noun "Son" to this phrase. Alternate translation: [his One and Only Son]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **into the world**
UST to this earth

John uses **world** to mean various things in this letter. Here it refers to the created world. Alternate translation: [to live on earth]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **so that we might live through him**
UST so that his Son would enable us to live eternally because of what he did for us

Since people were already literally alive before Jesus came, John means this in a figurative sense. He is likely referring to what he calls "eternal life" in 3:15. That includes both living forever in the presence of God after death and receiving power from God in this life to live in a new way. Alternate translation: [so that through him we might receive power from God to live as new people in this life and to live forever in God's presence after we die]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
love	loves
God	God
God	He
Son	Son
world	earth

1 John 4:10

ULT	UST
In this is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as the propitiation for our sins.	*I will tell you what loving someone really means. Our efforts to love God do not define what it means to love someone. No, God himself did that by loving us so much that he sent his Son to offer himself as a sacrifice in our place. When Jesus did that, God could forgive the sins of people who trust in Jesus instead of punishing them.*

ULT **In this is love**
UST I will tell you what loving {someone} really means

In this means something similar to the idiomatic expression “in this we know” that John uses many times in this letter. Alternate translation: [This is how we have experienced genuine love]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **In this is love**
UST I will tell you what loving {someone} really means

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract noun **love** by stating the meaning behind it with a verb. Alternate translation: [This is how we know what it means to love]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **his Son**
UST his Son

Son is an important title for Jesus. Alternate translation: [his Son Jesus]
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **sent his Son {as the} propitiation for our sins**
UST he sent his Son to offer himself as a sacrifice in our place. When Jesus did that, God could forgive the sins of people who trust in Jesus instead of punishing them

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract noun **propitiation** by stating the meaning behind it with an equivalent expression. See how you translated the term in 2:2. Alternate translation: [sent his Son to be the offering that made him no longer angry with us because of our sins]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
love	loving
loved	love
God	God
loved	loving
Son	Son
propitiation	to offer himself as a sacrifice in our place. When Jesus did that, God could forgive … instead of punishing
sins	sins

1 John 4:11

ULT	UST
Beloved, if God thus loved us, we also ought to love one another.	*Dear friends, since God loves us like that, we certainly ought to love each other!*

ULT **Beloved**
UST Dear friends

See how you translated **Beloved** in 2:7. Alternate translation: [You people whom I love]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **if God thus loved us**
UST since God loves us like that

John is speaking as if this were a hypothetical possibility, but he means that it is actually true. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, and if your readers might think that what John is saying is not certain, then you could translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: [because God loved us in this way]
Support Reference: Connect — Factual Conditions

ULT **thus**
UST like that

The word **thus** refers to the manner in which God showed his love to us, as described in verses 9 and 10. Alternate translation: [in that way]
Support Reference: Connect — Factual Conditions

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Beloved	Dear friends
God	God
loved	loves
love	love

1 John 4:12

ULT	UST
No one has ever seen God. If we love one another, God remains in us, and his love is perfected in us.	*No one has ever seen God. Nevertheless, when we love each other, we can see that God is working in us and that he is the one who enables us to love others, just as he intended for us to do.*

ULT **If we love one another, God remains in us, and his love is perfected in us**
UST Nevertheless, when we love each other, we can see that God is working in us and that he is the one who enables us to love others, just as he intended for us to do

John is speaking of a real situation as if it were a hypothetical condition. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is already real, and if your readers might think that what John is saying is not real, then you could translate his statement without using "if." Alternate translation: [But as we love each other, God remains in us, and his love is perfected in us] or [But by loving each other, we know that God remains in us, and his love is perfected in us]
Support Reference: Connect — Factual Conditions

ULT **God remains in us**
UST we can see that God is working in us

See the discussion of the term "remain" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. In this instance, it seems to mean the same thing as in 2:6. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [God continues to have a close relationship with us]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **his love is perfected in us**
UST he is the one who enables us to love others, just as he intended for us to do

See how you translated the similar expression in 2:5. In this case, it is clear that John is referring to God's love for us, rather than to our love for God. Alternate translation: [God's love has achieved its purpose in our lives]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
God	God
love	love
God	God
love	love
perfected	just as he intended

1 John 4:13

ULT	UST
In this we know that we remain in him and he in us: that he has given us of his Spirit.	*This is how we can be sure that we are sharing life with God and that God is sharing life with us: He has given us his own Spirit.*

ULT **In this we know that we remain in him and he in us: that he has given us of his Spirit**
UST This is how we can be sure that we are sharing life with God and that God is sharing life with us: He has given us his own Spirit

The expression **In this** introduces a note of assurance that contrasts with the idea in the previous verse, "No one has ever seen God." This verse is very similar to the second half of 3:24. See how you translated that verse. Alternate translation: [Nevertheless, this is how we know that we remain in him, and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit] or [But we know that we remain in him, and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit]
Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **In this we know that**
UST This is how we can be sure that

This is an idiomatic expression that John uses many times in this letter. Alternate translation: [This is how we know that]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **In this we know**
UST This is how we can be sure

The pronoun **this** refers forward to what John says in the second part of this verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Here is the reason that we know]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **we remain in him and he in us**
UST we are sharing life with God and that God is sharing life with us

In the expression **and he in us**, John is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: [we remain in him and he remains in us]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **we remain in him and he in us**
UST we are sharing life with God and that God is sharing life with us

See the discussion of the term "remain" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. In this instance, it seems to mean the same thing as in 2:6. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [we continue to have a close relationship with God, and God continues to have a close relationship with us]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **he has given us of his Spirit**
UST He has given us his own Spirit

The word **of** here means “some of.” However, God’s Spirit is not something that can be divided. Rather, John is saying that God is sharing his Spirit with us. God’s Spirit can be in many places, and he is fully present in every place. John is saying that through his Spirit, God is fully present in the entire community, and that each believer experiences some of that full presence of God through the presence of the Spirit in his own life. Be sure that it is also clear in your translation that God does not have less of his Spirit now that each of us has some. Alternate translation: [he has sent his Spirit to live in each of us]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	we can be sure
Spirit	Spirit

1 John 4:14

ULT	UST
Indeed, we have seen and we testify that the Father sent the Son as the Savior of the world.	*We apostles have seen God's Son Jesus on earth, and we solemnly tell others that the Father sent him to save the people in the world from suffering eternally for their sins.*

ULT **we have seen and we testify that**
UST We {apostles} have seen … and we solemnly tell others that

In this verse, John is speaking on behalf of himself and the other eyewitnesses of the earthly life of Jesus, so the pronoun **we** is exclusive. Alternate translation: [we apostles have seen and bear witness to the fact that]
Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

ULT **the Father … the Son**
UST God's Son Jesus on earth … the Father … him

Father and **Son** are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus. Alternate translation: [God the Father … Jesus his Son]
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **as the Savior of the world**
UST to save the people in the world from suffering eternally for their sins

John uses **world** to mean various things in this letter. Here it refers to the people living in the world. Alternate translation: [to save the people in the world]
Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
testify	we solemnly tell others
Father	Father
Son	God's Son Jesus on earth … him
Savior	to save … from suffering eternally for their sins
world	world

1 John 4:15

ULT	UST
Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him and he in God.	*So God continues to share life with those who say the truth about Jesus. They say, "Jesus is the Son of God." And so they continue to share life with God.*

ULT **Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him and he in God**
UST So God continues to share life with those who say the truth about Jesus. They say, "Jesus is the Son of God." And so they continue to share life with God

This can be translated as a conditional statement if that would be helpful in your language. John is saying that what he describes in the second phrase will happen only if what he describes in the first phrase happens. Then it will certainly happen. Alternate translation: [If someone confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, then God will remain in him and he will remain in God]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God**
UST those who say the truth about Jesus. They say, "Jesus is the Son of God

The meaning of this expression is similar to the expression "the one who confesses the Son" in 2:23. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [Everyone who truly believes and acknowledges publicly that Jesus is the Son of God]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the Son of God**
UST the Son of God

Son of God is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **God remains in him and he in God**
UST So God continues to share life with … say the truth about Jesus … And so they continue to share life with God

In the expression **and he in God**, John is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: [God remains in him and he remains in God]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **God remains in him and he in God**
UST So God continues to share life with … say the truth about Jesus … And so they continue to share life with God

See the discussion of the term "remain" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. In this instance, it seems to mean the same thing as in 2:6. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [God continues to have a close relationship with him, and he continues to have a close relationship with God]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
confesses	say the truth about Jesus
Jesus	Jesus
Son of God	Son of God
God	God
God	God

1 John 4:16

ULT	UST
And we have known and believed the love that God has in us. God is love, and the one remaining in love remains in God, and God remains in him.	*We have experienced how God loves us and we believe that he loves us. Because God's nature is to love people, those who continue to love others share life with God, and God shares life with them.*

ULT **we … us**
UST We … us … us

Here and in the rest of the letter, John speaks of himself and the believers to whom he is writing, so the words **we** and **us** will be inclusive. If your language marks that distinction, use the inclusive form in your translation.
Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

ULT **the love that God has in us**
UST how God loves us … he loves us

The phrase translated as **in us** here is the same as the phrase translated as "among us" in 4:9. Here it could mean: (1) God's love directed to us. Alternate translation: [the love that God has for us]; or (2) God's love directed to others through us. Alternate translation: [the love that God has put into us] It may also be that John used a very general phrase in order to include both meanings.
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **God is love**
UST Because God's nature is to love people

This is a metaphor that describes what God is like in his character. See how you translated it in 4:8. Alternate translation: [God is entirely loving]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the one remaining in love**
UST those who continue to love others

See the discussion of the term "remain" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. As in 2:24, in this instance the word seems to refer to maintaining a pattern of behavior. Alternate translation: [a person who continues to love others]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **remains in God, and God remains in him**
UST share life with God, and God shares life with them

See the discussion of the term "remain" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. In this instance, it seems to mean the same thing as in 2:6 and in 4:15. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [continues to have a close relationship with God, and God continues to have a close relationship with him]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
known	have experienced
believed	believe
love	loves
God	God
God	God’s
love	love
love	love
God	God
God	God

1 John 4:17

ULT	UST
In this, love has been perfected with us so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment because, just as that one is, we also are in this world.	*When we continue to share life with God, then God has achieved his purpose in loving us. As a result, when the time comes for God to judge us, we will be confident that he will not condemn us. This is because we are loving others as we live in this world just as Jesus is.*

ULT **In this**
UST When we continue to share life with God

As in 4:9, **In this** means something similar to the idiomatic expression "in this we know" that John uses many times in this letter. Alternate translation: [By doing this]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **In this**
UST When we continue to share life with God

In this may refer: (1) backward to the last sentence of verse 16. Alternate translation: [By remaining in God,]; or (2) forward to the clause beginning **because just as that one is**. Alternate translation: [By loving others just the way that Jesus does,]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **love has been perfected with us**
UST then God has achieved his purpose in loving us

See how you translated the similar expression in 2:5. Since John speaks in the previous verse of God's love, here John is probably continuing to refer to God's love for us, rather than to our love for God. Alternate translation: [God's love has achieved its purpose in our lives]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment**
UST As a result, when the time comes for God to judge us, we will be confident that he will not condemn us

The clause beginning **so that** could function as: (1) a result clause. That is, John may be saying that as a result of God's love achieving its purposes in our lives now, we will be confident on the day of judgment of his forgiveness and acceptance. If you decide that is the case, then your translation should follow the conventions of your language for result clauses. Alternate translation: [with the result that we may have confidence in the day of judgment]; or (2) a purpose clause. That is, John may be saying that one reason why God is having his love achieve its purpose in our lives now is that on the day of judgment, he wants us to be confident of his forgiveness and acceptance. If you decide that is the case, then your translation should follow the conventions of your language for purpose clauses.
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **so that we may have confidence**
UST As a result … we will be confident that he will not condemn us

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly what believers will **have confidence** about. Alternate translation: [so that we will be confident that God has forgiven us and will accept us]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **so that we may have confidence**
UST As a result … we will be confident that he will not condemn us

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **confidence** with an adjective such as "confident." Alternate translation: [so that we will be confident that God has forgiven us and will accept us]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **in the day of judgment**
UST when the time comes for God to judge us

John is using the term **day** to refer to a specific time. Alternate translation: [at the time when God judges us]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **because**
UST This is because

The word translated as **because** here can be understood in different ways, depending on how you translated **In this** at the beginning of the verse: (1) If you translated **In this** as referring back to verse 16, then this word can be translated as "because." (2) If you translated **In this** as referring to the clause beginning with this word, then translate this word with one that introduces the content of **In this**, such as "that."
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **because, just as that one is, we also are**
UST This is because we are loving others as … just as Jesus is

The phrase **that one** refers to Jesus. Alternate translation: [since we are becoming more and more like Jesus]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **in this world**
UST we live in this world

John uses **world** to mean various things in this letter, usually in a figurative sense. Here, however, it refers literally to the created world. Alternate translation: [as we live in this world] or [in our lives on this earth]
Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
love	loving
perfected	then God has achieved his purpose
day	when the time comes
judgment	judge
world	world

1 John 4:18

ULT	UST
Fear is not in love, but perfect love throws fear outside, because fear has punishment. So the one fearing has not been perfected in love.	*We will not be afraid of God if we truly love him, because those who love God completely cannot be afraid of him. We would be afraid only if we thought that he would punish us. So those who are afraid of God have not completely understood how much he loves them, and they are not loving God completely.*

ULT **Fear is not in love, but perfect love throws fear outside, because fear has punishment**
UST We will not be afraid {of God} if we truly love him, because those who love {God} completely cannot be afraid {of him}. We would be afraid only if we thought that he would punish us

If it would be helpful in your language, you could put the third clause before the first clause, since the third clause gives the reason for the result that the first clause describes. Alternate translation: [Because fear has punishment, fear is not in love, but perfect love throws fear outside]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **Fear is not in love, but perfect love throws fear outside, because fear has punishment**
UST We will not be afraid {of God} if we truly love him, because those who love {God} completely cannot be afraid {of him}. We would be afraid only if we thought that he would punish us

If it would be helpful in your language, you could state explicitly what John means by **fear**, **perfect love**, and **punishment**, particularly in light of what he says in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [A person who thinks he is going to be punished is afraid, but no one who truly understands how much God loves him will be afraid, because when God's love has achieved its purpose in our lives, we are confident that he has forgiven us and will accept us]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Fear is not in love**
UST We will not be afraid {of God} if we truly love him

John speaks as if **Fear** could be inside of **love**. Alternate translation: [no one who truly understands how much God loves him will be afraid]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **perfect love throws fear outside**
UST those who love {God} completely cannot be afraid of him

By **perfect love**, John means the same thing as when he speaks in the previous verse of love that "has been perfected." See how you translated that expression. Alternate translation: [when God's love has achieved its purpose in our lives, it keeps us from being afraid]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **perfect love throws fear outside**
UST those who love {God} completely cannot be afraid of him

John speaks of **love** as if it could actively throw **fear** far away from us. Alternate translation: [when God's love has achieved its purpose in our lives, it keeps us from being afraid]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **fear has punishment**
UST We would be afraid only if we thought that he would punish us

If it would be helpful in your language, you could clarify the relationship between **fear** and **punishment**. Alternate translation: [fear has to do with punishment] or [people are afraid when they think they will be punished]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **So the one fearing has not been perfected in love**
UST So those who are afraid {of God} have not completely understood how much he loves them, and they are not loving {God} completely

See how you translated the similar expression in 2:5. Here, as there, **love** could mean: (1) God's love for us. Alternate translation: [So if someone is afraid, then God's love has not achieved its purpose in his life]; or (2) our love for God. Alternate translation: [So if someone is afraid, then he does not yet love God perfectly] It could also mean both things, as in 3:17. If you must choose, then we recommend option (1). But if your translation can leave both possibilities open, that would be best. Alternate translation: [So if someone is afraid, then love is not yet fully working in his life]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **So the one fearing has not been perfected in love**
UST So those who are afraid {of God} have not completely understood how much he loves them, and they are not loving {God} completely

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly what such a person **fears**. This is clear from the previous verse. Alternate translation: [So if someone is afraid that God has not forgiven him and that God will not accept him, then God's love has not achieved its purpose in his life]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Fear	afraid
love	love
perfect	completely
love	love
fear	afraid
fear	afraid
punishment	punish
fearing	afraid
perfected	have … completely understood … completely
love	loves

1 John 4:19

ULT	UST
We love because he first loved us.	*We love God and others because God loved us first.*

ULT **We love because he first loved us**
UST We love {God and others} because God loved us first

This verse summarizes the idea of verse 10. See how you translated there. If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: [Because God first loved us, we love]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **We love**
UST We love God and others

If you need to say who it is that **We love**, there are two possibilities, and John probably intended both here. If you must choose, then we recommend option (1) below, but if your translation can include both possibilities as in the UST, that would be best. Alternate translation: (1) [We love God]; or (2) [We love others]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **he first loved us**
UST God loved us first

The pronoun **he** refers to God. Alternate translation: [God first loved us]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
love	love
loved	loved

1 John 4:20

ULT	UST
If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar. For the one not loving his brother, whom he has seen, is not able to love God, whom he has not seen.	*People are lying if they say that they love God but they also hate a fellow believer. After all, we can see our fellow believers. But we have not seen God. So those who do not love one of their fellow believers certainly cannot be loving God, because it is much easier to love someone whom you can see than someone whom you cannot see.*

ULT **If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar**

UST People are lying if they say … they love God but they also hate a fellow believer

John is using a hypothetical situation to help his readers recognize the importance of consistency between their words and their actions. Alternate translation: [Suppose someone says, "I love God," but he hates his brother. Then he is a liar]

Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **and**

UST but … also

John is using the word translated as **and** to introduce a contrast between what would be expected, that someone who loved God would also love his fellow believers, and what would actually be true of this hypothetical person. Alternate translation: [but]

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **his brother**

UST a fellow believer

See how you translated **his brother** in 2:9. Alternate translation: [one of his fellow believers]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the one not loving his brother … is not able to love God**

UST our fellow believers. But … not … God … those who do … love one of their fellow believers certainly cannot be loving God, because it is much easier to love someone whom you can see than someone whom you cannot see

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this double negative by translating it as a positive statement. Alternate translation: [only the person who loves his fellow believers … is able to love God]

Support Reference: Double Negatives

> ULT **For the one not loving his brother, whom he has seen, is not able to love God, whom he has not seen**
>
> UST After all, we can see our fellow believers. But we have not seen God. So those who do not love one of their fellow believers certainly cannot be loving God, because it is much easier to love someone whom you can see than someone whom you cannot see

If it would be helpful in your language, you could state explicitly why this is true. Alternate translation: [This is true because it is much easier to love your fellow believer who is right in front of you than to love God, whom you could not even see.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
love	love
God	God
loving	love
love	loving
God	God

1 John 4:21

ULT	UST
Indeed, we have this commandment from him, that the one loving God should also love his brother.	*Keep in mind that this is what God has commanded us: If we love him, we must also love our fellow believers.*

ULT **from him**
UST God

The pronoun **him** refers to God. Alternate translation: [from God]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the one loving God**
UST we love him

Here, **the one** refers to anyone who loves God. Alternate translation: [anyone who loves God]
Support Reference: Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **his brother**
UST our fellow believers

See how you translated **his brother** in 2:9. Alternate translation: [each fellow believer]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
loving	love
God	him
love	love

1 John 5

1 John 5 Introduction

1 John 5 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

1. It is false teaching to deny that Jesus is the Son of God (5:1–12)
2. Closing of Letter (5:13–21)

Translation Issues in This Chapter

“a sin toward death”

In the context, the word “death” in this phrase refers to spiritual death, which is eternal separation from God. But it is not entirely clear what the sin is that John is talking about. It is unlikely that John is referring to one sin in particular, but instead he is talking about a certain kind of sin. Given the context of this letter, he is probably referring to the kind of sin that the false teachers were committing by denying that Jesus was the Son of God and that he came in the flesh, and by rejecting his forgiveness. See the further discussion in the notes to 5:16.

“the whole world lies in the power of the evil one”

The phrase “the evil one” refers to Satan. God has allowed him to rule the world, but, ultimately, God is in control over everything. God keeps his children safe from the evil one. (See: Satan, devil, evil one)

Textual Issues in This Chapter

In 5:7–8, all ancient manuscripts say: “For there are three who testify, the Spirit and the water and the blood, and the three are unto the one.” That is the reading that ULT follows. Some much later manuscripts say: “For there are three who testify in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one; and there are three who testify on earth: the Spirit and the water and the blood, and these three are unto the one.” In this case, translators are advised to translate this as the ULT text does, since there is wide agreement that it follows the accurate reading. However, if there are older versions of the Bible in your region that have the longer reading, you could include it, but you should put it inside square brackets ([ ]) and indicate in a footnote that it was most likely not in the original version of 1 John. (See: Textual Variants)

In 5:18, the majority of ancient manuscripts say: “the one begotten from God keeps himself.” This means that the believer, whom John has just said is “having been begotten from God” in a spiritual sense, keeps himself away from sin. But many ancient manuscripts say: “the one begotten from God keeps him.” This means that Jesus, who is God’s actual, only-begotten Son, keeps the believer from sin. The ULT follows the reading of the majority of ancient manuscripts, but most English translations follow the other reading. This is probably because the reading with “him” seems to make a more meaningful theological statement than the other

reading. Scholars are divided about this, so either choice is acceptable. You may want to follow the reading of the respected translations in your area.

1 John 5:1

ULT	UST
Everyone believing that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten from God, and everyone loving the one begetting also loves the one having been begotten from him.	*All those who believe that Jesus is the Messiah are spiritually children of God. Now, whoever loves anyone who is a father certainly loves his child also. So if we believe in Jesus, then we love God, and therefore we should also love his spiritual children, our fellow believers.*

If you are using section headings, you could put one here before verse 1. Suggested heading: "Jesus is the Messiah and Son of God"

Support Reference: Section Headings

ULT **Everyone believing that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten from God**
UST All those who believe that Jesus is the Messiah are spiritually children of God … So if we believe in Jesus

See how you translated the similar expression in 2:29. Alternate translation: [God is the father of everyone who believes that Jesus is the Messiah]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **Everyone believing that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten from God**
UST All those who believe that Jesus is the Messiah are spiritually children of God … So if we believe in Jesus

See whether in 2:29 you decided to explain this metaphor. Alternate translation: [God is the spiritual father of everyone who believes that Jesus is the Messiah]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **everyone loving the one begetting also loves the one having been begotten from him**
UST whoever loves anyone who is a father {certainly} loves his child also … we love God, and therefore we should also love his spiritual children, our fellow believers

John includes this short saying to teach something that is generally true about life and that applies to the point he has been developing since 4:7, that genuine believers love one another as God has loved them. Use the natural form in your language for a true saying. Alternate translation: [everyone who loves a father also loves that father's child]

Support Reference: Proverbs

ULT **everyone loving the one begetting also loves the one having been begotten from him**
UST whoever loves anyone who is a father {certainly} loves his child also … we love God, and therefore we should also love his spiritual children, our fellow believers

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly what this means and how it applies to John's argument in this part of the letter. Alternate translation: [everyone who loves God will also love his fellow believers, since God is their spiritual father]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

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TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
believing	believe
Jesus	Jesus
Christ	Messiah
has been begotten	are spiritually children … So if we believe in Jesus
God	God
loving	loves
begetting	anyone who is a father … God
loves	loves
having been begotten	child … spiritual children, our fellow believers

1 John 5:2

ULT	UST
In this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and we keep his commandments.	*We can be sure that we do truly love God's spiritual children when we love God and do what he commands us to do.*

ULT **In this we know that**
UST We can be sure that

This is an idiomatic expression that John uses many times in this letter. Alternate translation: [This is how we know that]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the children of God**
UST God's spiritual children

Since John says in the previous verse that God is the spiritual father of believers, by **the children of God** he means other believers. Alternate translation: [our fellow believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **we keep his commandments**
UST do what he commands us to do

Here, **keep** is an idiom that means "obey." Alternate translation: [we obey his commandments]
Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	We can be sure
love	love
God	God's
love	love
God	God

1 John 5:3

ULT	UST
For this is the love of God, that we should keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.	*I am saying this because what loving God really means is that we do what he commands us to do. And it is not difficult to do what he commands us to do.*

ULT **For**
UST I am saying … because

In this verse, John gives a reason why his readers should recognize that the statement he makes in the previous verse is true. Alternate translation: [After all,]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **For this is the love of God, that we should keep his commandments**
UST I am saying this because what loving God really means is that we do what he commands us to do

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly why this is the reason for the statement that John makes in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [And this is why: If we really do love God, we will love other believers, as he has commanded]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the love of God**
UST loving God

In this context, the phrase **the love of God** refers to believers loving God. John speaks in the previous verse of "when we love God." Alternate translation: [what it means to love God]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **that we should keep his commandments**
UST that we do what he commands us to do

Here, **keep** is an idiom that means "obey." Alternate translation: [that we should obey his commandments]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **his commandments are not burdensome**
UST it is not difficult to do what he commands us to do

John speaks of God's **commandments** as if they had weight but did not weigh very much. Alternate translation: [his commandments are not difficult to obey]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
love	loving
God	God

1 John 5:4

ULT	UST
For everyone who has been begotten from God triumphs over the world. And this is the triumph that has triumphed over the world, our faith.	*Here is the reason why it is not difficult for us to do what God commands. All of us who have become God's spiritual children have been able to refuse to do what unbelievers want us to do. There is one reason why we are stronger than everything that is against God. It is because we trust in Jesus.*

ULT **For everyone who has been begotten from God triumphs over the world**
UST Here is the reason why it is not difficult for us to do what God commands. All of us who have become God's spiritual children have been able to refuse to do what unbelievers want us to do

Verses 3 and 4 might be clearer in your language if you reorder and combine them as a verse bridge. To do so, you could begin this sentence with "Since" instead of **For**; you could end it with a comma instead of a period; and you could make it the beginning of the second sentence in the previous verse. It would go before "his commandments are not burdensome." The word "And" would be left out. The result would be: "For this is the love of God, that we should keep his commandments. Since everyone who has been begotten from God overcomes the world, his commandments are not burdensome. And this is the victory that has overcome the world, our faith."

Support Reference: Verse Bridges

ULT **everyone who has been begotten from God**
UST All of us who have become God's spiritual children

See how you translated the similar expression in 2:29. Alternate translation: [everyone whose father is God]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **everyone who has been begotten from God**
UST All of us who have become God's spiritual children

See whether in 2:29 you decided to explain this metaphor. Alternate translation: [everyone whose spiritual father is God]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **triumphs over the world**
UST have been able to refuse to do what unbelievers want us to do

As in 2:13, John is using the word translated as **triumphs over**. Here John is speaking of the believers' refusal to live by the value system of ungodly people as if the believers had defeated that system in a struggle. Alternate translation: [does not live by the value system of ungodly people]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the world**
UST what unbelievers want us to do

See how you translated the term **world** in 2:15. It has a similar meaning in this verse. Alternate translation: [the value system of ungodly people]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the triumph that has triumphed over**
UST we are stronger than

Here, **the triumph that has triumphed over** is an emphatic construction that uses a noun and verb that come from the same root. You may be able to use a similar construction in your language to express the meaning here. Alternatively, your language may have another way of showing the emphasis.
Support Reference: Poetry

ULT **the triumph that has triumphed over**
UST we are stronger than

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **triumph** by combining it with the verb **triumphed over**. Alternate translation: [what has enabled us to triumph over]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the triumph**
UST we are stronger than

John is speaking of the thing that has won **the triumph** as if it were **the triumph** itself. Alternate translation: [what has won the triumph and]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **that has triumphed over the world**
UST we are stronger than everything that is against God

Once again John is using the word translated as **triumphed over**. He is speaking of the **faith** that he and his readers share as if it had defeated the ungodly value system in a struggle. Alternate translation: [that enables us to live differently from the value system of ungodly people]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the world**
UST everything that is against God

John is using the term **world** to mean the same thing as in the previous sentence. Alternate translation: [the value system of ungodly people]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **our faith**
UST It is because we trust in Jesus

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **faith** with a verb such as “believe.” Alternate translation: [that we believe in Jesus]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
who has been begotten	who have become … spiritual children
God	God
world	what unbelievers want us to do
world	everything that is against God
faith	It is because … trust in Jesus

1 John 5:5

ULT	UST
But who is the one triumphing over the world if not the one believing that Jesus is the Son of God?	*I will tell you who is stronger than everything that is against God: It is anyone who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.*

ULT **But who is the one triumphing over the world if not the one believing that Jesus is the Son of God**

UST I will tell you who is stronger than everything that is against God: It is anyone who believes that Jesus is the Son of God

John is using the question form for emphasis, to reaffirm what he said in the first sentence of the previous verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement and provide emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [But only someone who believes that Jesus is the Son of God triumphs over the world.]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **triumphing over the world**

UST is stronger than everything that is against God

See how you translated **triumphs over the world** in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [who does not live by the value system of ungodly people]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the world**

UST everything that is against God

See how you translated **the world** in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [the value system of ungodly people]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the Son of God**

UST the Son of God

Son of God is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.

Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
world	everything that is against God
believing	believes
Jesus	Jesus
Son of God	Son of God

1 John 5:6

ULT	UST
This is the one having come by water and blood: Jesus Christ—not in water alone, but in water and in blood. And the Spirit is the one testifying, because the Spirit is truth.	*Jesus the Messiah is the one who came to earth from God, experiencing both the water of his baptism and the blood of his death on the cross. God showed that he had truly sent Jesus not only when John baptized Jesus in water, but also when Jesus' blood flowed from his body when he died. And God's Spirit declares truthfully that Jesus the Messiah did these things, because the Spirit is completely truthful.*

ULT **This is the one having come by water and blood**

UST Jesus … is the one who came {to earth from God}, experiencing both {the} water {of his baptism} and {the} blood of his death on the cross

John is specifying here what it means to believe fully that "Jesus is the Son of God," as he described in the previous verse. The terms **water** and **blood** are metonyms representing different important ways that the Son of God **came** to us. You may want to clarify these meanings in the text or do so in a footnote. The **blood** represents Jesus' death on the cross, when he shed his blood as the Savior of the world. The **water** could stand for: (1) Jesus' baptism. When John baptized Jesus in the water of the Jordan River, the Son of God began his ministry of reconciling the world to God. See the UST. (2) Jesus' birth. There was the breaking of the birth water when the Son of God was born as a man. Alternate translation: [This is the one who came through the water of human birth and the blood of his sacrificial death]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the one having come**

UST the one who came to earth from God

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state more explicitly what **having come** means, as UST does.

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **by water and blood**

UST experiencing both {the} water {of his baptism} and {the} blood of his death on the cross

John is using a metaphor that pictures **water and blood** conveying Jesus to us or Jesus coming to us through water and through blood. The meaning is either that: (1) Jesus became our Savior as he experienced baptism in water and submitted himself to death on the cross. Alternate translation: [as our Savior, undergoing baptism and death]; or (2) Jesus became our Savior as he experienced human birth and submitted himself to death on the cross. Alternate translation: [as our Savior, undergoing human birth and death]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **not in water alone, but in water and in blood**
UST not only {when John baptized Jesus} in water, but also when Jesus' blood flowed from his body when he died

If it sounds confusing in your language to say **not in water … but in water**, you could reword this to avoid repeating the phrase **in water**. Alternate translation: [not in water alone, but also in blood]
Support Reference: Connect — Exception Clauses

ULT **the Spirit is truth**
UST the Spirit is completely truthful

Like the statement "God is love" in 4:8 and 4:16, which describes God's character, this is a metaphor that describes the character of the Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: [the Spirit always tells the truth]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Jesus	Jesus
Christ	Messiah
Spirit	Spirit
testifying	declares truthfully that Jesus the Messiah did these things
Spirit	Spirit

1 John 5:7

ULT	UST
For there are three who are testifying:	*So there are three ways by which we know that Jesus is the Messiah who came from God.*

ULT **For there are three who are testifying**
UST So there are three ways by which we know that Jesus is the Messiah who came from God

In this statement, John reaffirms that the three things that he mentions in verse 6 give us confidence that Jesus is the Son of God and came from him. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this explicitly. Alternate translation: [So there are three who testify that Jesus is God's Son and came from him]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **For there are three who are testifying**
UST So there are three ways by which we know that Jesus is the Messiah who came from God

See the discussion of textual issues at the end of the introduction to this chapter to decide whether to follow the reading of ULT or to follow the reading of some late manuscripts and say in your translation, "For there are three who testify in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. And there are three who testify on earth." As the introduction recommends, if you decide to use the longer reading, put it inside square brackets ([ ]) to indicate that it was most likely not in the original version of 1 John.

Support Reference: Textual Variants

ULT **who are testifying**
UST ways by which we know that Jesus is the Messiah who came from God

Here John speaks of water and blood as though they were people who could **testify**, or speak about what they saw. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [ways that God has given us to know that he sent Jesus]

Support Reference: Personification

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
testifying	ways by which we know that Jesus is the Messiah who came from God

1 John 5:8

ULT	UST
the Spirit and the water and the blood, and the three are unto the one.	*Those three ways are: what God's Spirit tells us, what happened when John baptized Jesus in water, and what happened when Jesus' blood flowed from his body when he died on the cross. These three things all tell us the same thing, that Jesus came from God.*

ULT **the water and the blood**

UST what happened {when John baptized Jesus} in water, and what happened when {Jesus'} blood flowed from his body when he died on the cross

See how you decided to translate the terms **water** and **blood** in 5:6. Alternate translation: (1) [the baptism of Jesus and his death on the cross]; or (2) [the birth of Jesus and his death on the cross]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the three are unto the one**

UST These three things all tell us the same thing, that Jesus came from God

This is an idiom. If this does not communicate well in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: [these three all say the same thing] or [these three all agree]

Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Spirit	Spirit

1 John 5:9

ULT	UST
If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater. For this is the testimony of God, that he has testified about his Son.	*We rely on what people tell us when we have to decide about something. But we can certainly rely much more on what God tells us. So let me tell you what God has told us about who his Son is.*

ULT **If we receive the testimony of men**
UST We rely on what people tell us when we have to decide about something

John is speaking as if this were a hypothetical possibility, but he means that it is actually true. If your language does not state something this way if it is certain or true, and if your readers might think that what John is saying is not certain, then you could translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: [Since we receive the testimony of men]
Support Reference: Connect — Factual Conditions

ULT **we receive the testimony of men**
UST We rely on what people tell us when we have to decide about something

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: [we believe people when they give testimony]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **of men**
UST people

Although the term **men** is masculine, John is using the word in a generic sense that could include both men and women. Alternate translation: [of people]
Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **the testimony of God is greater**
UST But we can certainly rely much more on what God tells us

The word **greater** implicitly means that the testimony of God is more reliable than human testimony since God knows everything and God always tells the truth. Alternate translation: [the testimony of God is more reliable]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the testimony of God is greater**
UST But we can certainly rely much more on what God tells us

John is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: [we should certainly receive the testimony of God since it is greater] or [we should certainly believe God when he gives testimony since his testimony is even more reliable]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **For this is the testimony of God, that he has testified about his Son**
UST So let me tell you what God has told us about who his Son is

Here, **For** could be introducing: (1) the content of God's testimony to his Son. In that case, the content itself comes in 5:11 after he repeats, "this is the testimony." Verse 10 talks about the importance of believing God's testimony. Alternate translation: [Now this is the testimony that God himself has given regarding his Son]; or (2) the reason why the testimony of God is greater than human testimony. Alternate translation: [After all, this is God who has told us about his own Son]

Support Reference: Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **this is the testimony of God**
UST let me tell you what God has told us

Here, **this** could refer to: (1) God's testimony, which John says in 5:11. Alternate translation: [I will tell you what God's testimony is]; or (2) the three testimonies from 5:8. Alternate translation: [those things are the testimony of God]

Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **his Son**
UST his Son

Son is an important title for Jesus. Alternate translation: [his Son Jesus]

Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
receive	We rely on
testimony	what … tell us when we have to decide about something
testimony	what … tells us
God	God
testimony	what … has told us
God	God
testified	about who … is
Son	Son

1 John 5:10

ULT	UST
The one believing in the Son of God has the testimony in him. The one not believing God has made him a liar because he has not believed in the testimony that God has testified about his Son.	*First, however, let me say that those who trust in the Son of God already know that what God says about him is true. But those who do not believe what God says are calling him a liar because they have refused to believe what God has testified about his Son.*

ULT **The one believing in the Son of God has the testimony in him. The one not believing God has made him a liar because he has not believed in the testimony that God has testified about his Son**

UST First, however, let me say that those who trust in the Son of God already know that what God says about him is true. But those who do not believe what God says are calling him a liar because they have refused to believe what God has testified about his Son

This verse comes in between John's two introductions of God's testimony. You could include this information that tells your reader that the testimony is still coming, as in the UST, if that would be helpful to your readers.

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **The one believing**

UST First, however, let me say that those who trust

John is speaking of everyone who believes, not of any particular person. Alternate translation: [Any person who believes]

Support Reference: Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **in the Son of God**

UST in the Son of God

John implicitly means that they believe that Jesus is the Son of God. Alternate translation: [that Jesus is the Son of God]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the Son of God**

UST the Son of God

Son of God is an important title for Jesus.

Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **has the testimony in him**

UST already know that what God says about him is true

John speaks of the **testimony** as if it were an object that could be inside believers. Alternate translation: [completely accepts what God has said]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the testimony**
UST already know that what God says about him is true

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **testimony** with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [what God has said]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **has made him a liar**
UST are calling him a liar

As in 1:10, be sure that it is clear in your translation that God would not actually be a **liar** in this case. Rather, since God has said that Jesus is his Son, a person who did not believe that would be calling God a liar. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [is, in effect, saying that God is a liar]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the testimony that God has testified about his Son**
UST what God has testified about his Son

John is using a construction in which a verb and its object come from the same root. You may be able to use the same construction in your language. Alternatively, your language may have another way of saying this. Alternate translation: [what God has testified about his Son] or [the testimony that God has given about his son]
Support Reference: Poetry

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
believing	who trust
Son of God	Son of God
testimony	already know that what God says about him is true
believing	believe
God	God
believed	believe
testimony	what
God	God
testified	testified
Son	Son

1 John 5:11

ULT	UST
And this is the testimony: that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.	*Now this is what God has told us about who his Son is: "I gave you eternal life, and my Son is the one who makes this life possible."*

ULT **God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son**
UST I gave you eternal life, and my Son is the one who makes this life possible

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this as a direct quotation, as in the UST.
Support Reference: Direct and Indirect Quotations

ULT **God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son**
UST I gave you eternal life, and my Son is the one who makes this life possible

John speaks of **life** as if it were an object that was inside Jesus. Alternate translation: [God gave us eternal life, which people receive by believing in his Son Jesus]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **eternal life**
UST eternal life

As in 4:9, **eternal life** means two things at once. It means receiving power from God in this life to live in a new way, and it also means living forever in the presence of God after death. See how you translated the expression in 4:9.
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Son**
UST Son is the one who

Son is an important title for Jesus. Alternate translation: [his Son Jesus]
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
testimony	what God has told us about who his Son is
God	I
eternal	eternal
Son	Son is the one who

1 John 5:12

ULT	UST
The one having the Son has life. The one not having the Son of God does not have life.	*Those who share life with God's Son Jesus have begun to live forever with God. Those who do not share life with God's Son have not begun to live forever.*

ULT **The one having the Son has life. The one not having the Son of God does not have life**
UST Those who share life with God's Son {Jesus} have begun to live forever {with God}. Those who do not share life with God's Son have not begun to live forever

John speaks of believers who are in a close relationship with Jesus as if Jesus were their possession. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different expression. Alternate translation: [Anyone who is in a close relationship with the Son has life. Anyone who is not in a close relationship with the Son of God does not have life]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **has life … does not have life**
UST have begun to live forever with God … have not begun to live forever

Since both groups of people are physically alive, John means this in a spiritual sense. As in 4:9, he is likely referring to what he calls "eternal life" in 3:15 and 5:11. See how you translated that term in those verses. Alternate translation: [has power from God to live as a new person now and will live forever in God's presence after death … does not have power from God to live as a new person now and will not live forever in God's presence after death]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the Son … the Son of God**
UST God's Son Jesus … God's Son

Son and **Son of God** are important titles for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Son	Son Jesus
Son of God	God's Son

1 John 5:13

ULT	UST
I have written these things to you, the ones believing in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.	*Because I want you to know that you will live forever, I have written this letter to you. This is for you who believe that Jesus is the Son of God.*

ULT **these things**
UST this letter

Here, **these things** refers back to everything that John has written so far in the letter. Alternate translation: [all of this]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the ones believing in the name of the Son of God**
UST This is for you who believe that Jesus is the Son of God

As in 2:12, John is using the **name** of Jesus to represent who Jesus is and what he has done. Alternate translation: [who believe in the Son of God and what he has done for you]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **of the Son of God**
UST the Son of God

Son of God is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **that you have eternal life**
UST that you will live forever

The emphasis in this verse seems to be more on the future aspect of the expression **eternal life**. Alternate translation: [that you will live forever in God's presence after you die]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
believing	believe
Son of God	Son of God
know	know
eternal	forever

1 John 5:14

ULT	UST
And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he listens to us.	*I also want you to know that we can be very confident that God wants to do what we ask of him when we pray for what he desires.*

ULT **this is the confidence that we have toward him**
UST we can be very confident … of him

If it would be helpful to your readers, as in 3:21 you could state explicitly what this **confidence** applies to in light of what John says in the rest of this sentence. Alternate translation: [we can be confident of this as we pray to God]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **this is the confidence that we have toward him**
UST we can be very confident … of him

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **confidence** with an adjective such as "confident." Alternate translation: [we can be confident of this as we pray to God]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **this**
UST we can be very confident

The pronoun **this** refers to what John is about to say in the rest of the verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [I will tell you what]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **him … his … he listens**
UST God wants to do … of him … he

The pronouns **him**, **his**, and **he** refer to God in this verse. Consider whether it might be helpful to your readers or more natural in your language to use the name "God" in one or more of these instances.
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **he listens to us**
UST wants to do … we

As in 4:5, the word **listens** is an idiom. However, the meaning here is different than the meaning there, which was, "is persuaded by." Rather, here it refers to God being willing to grant what we ask. Alternate translation: [he is willing to give it to us]
Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
his will	God … for what he desires

1 John 5:15

ULT	UST
And if we know that he listens to us, whatever we may request, we know that we have the requests that we have requested from him.	*Since we know that God wants to give us whatever we ask of him, if it is what he desires, then we also know that God is already giving us what we ask of him.*

ULT **if we know that he listens to us**
UST Since we know that God wants to give us

John is speaking as if this were a hypothetical possibility, but he means that it is actually true. If your language does not state something as a possibility if it is certain or true, and if your readers might think that what John is saying is not certain, then you could translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: [since we know that he listens to us]
Support Reference: Connect — Factual Conditions

ULT **he listens to us**
UST God wants to give us

As in 5:14, the word **listens** is an idiom. See how you translated it there. Alternate translation: [he is willing to give us what we ask for]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **he listens to us**
UST God wants to give us

It may be helpful to repeat the condition that John specifies in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [he is inclined to give us what we ask for if it is according to his will]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **he listens … him**
UST God wants to give … of him

The pronouns **he** and **him** refer to God in this verse. Consider whether it might be more natural in your language to use the name “God” for **he** and to say **him** later in the verse.
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	know
know	know

1 John 5:16

ULT	UST
If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not toward death, he will ask, and he will give him life, for the ones sinning not toward death. There is a sin toward death; I am not saying that he should pray about that.	*For example, suppose someone sees one of his fellow believers sinning in a way that would not separate him from God eternally. Then he should ask God to restore the one who is sinning. If he does that, then God will bring that person back into spiritual life with himself. However, I am saying this only about people who are sinning in a way that would not separate them from God eternally. There is sin that causes people to separate from God eternally. I am not saying that you should pray for people who are sinning in that way.*

ULT **If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not toward death, he will ask**
UST For example, suppose someone sees one of his fellow believers sinning in a way that would not separate him from God eternally. Then he should ask God to restore the one who is sinning

John is describing a hypothetical situation in order to counsel his readers. UST models an alternative way of showing this.
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **his brother**
UST one of his fellow believers

See how you translated **his brother** in 2:9. Alternate translation: [a fellow believer]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **sinning a sin**
UST sinning

John is using a construction in which a verb and its object come from the same root. You may be able to use the same construction in your language to express the meaning here. Alternatively, your language may have another way of expressing this. Alternate translation: [committing a sin]
Support Reference: Poetry

ULT **a sin not toward death … for the ones sinning not toward death … a sin toward death**
UST sinning in a way that would not separate him from God eternally … However, I am saying this only about people who are sinning in a way that would not separate them from God eternally … sin that causes people to separate from God eternally

The word **death** in this verse and the next refers to spiritual death, that is, to eternal separation from God. (See the later note to this verse for a discussion of what kind of sin John may have in mind that would lead to that.) Alternate translation: [a sin that does not lead to eternal separation from God … for those whose sin will not lead to eternal separation from God … a sin that does lead to eternal separation from God]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **he will ask**
UST Then he should ask God to restore the one who is sinning

John is using a future statement to give an instruction and command. Alternate translation: [he should pray for that fellow believer]
Support Reference: Statements — Other Uses

ULT **he will give him life**
UST then God will bring that person back into spiritual life with himself

In this clause, the pronoun **him** refers to the believer who is sinning, and the pronoun **he** could refer to: (1) God since only God can give spiritual life. Alternate translation: [God will give life to the believer who is sinning]; or (2) **anyone**, that is, the person praying. In this case, John may be picturing God giving life by means of the person's prayers, as in James 5:15 and 20. Alternate translation: [he will be God's instrument to give life to the believer who is sinning]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **he will give him life**
UST then God will bring that person back into spiritual life with himself

The word **life** here refers to spiritual life, that is, to eternal life with God. Alternate translation: [God will make sure that the believer who is sinning is not separated from him eternally]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **There is a sin toward death; I am not saying that he should pray about that**
UST There is sin that causes people to separate from God eternally. I am not saying that you should pray for people who are sinning in that way

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state more explicitly what this means. In the context of the whole letter, by **a sin toward death**, John is probably referring to behavior such as the false teachers engaged in and encouraged. As Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John explains, these false teachers claimed that it did not matter what people did in their bodies, and so they would have been committing many serious sins without feeling any conviction that their actions were wrong. This showed that they had abandoned faith in Jesus and had rejected the influence of the Holy Spirit. John implicitly corrects this false teaching again in 5:18. Here John is not telling the believers not to pray for some people. Rather, he is explaining that it will not do any good to pray for them since they are determined to live in a way that is contrary to faith in Jesus and the influence of the Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: [There are people (such as the false teachers) who are sinning in a way that shows that they have decided to be separated from God for eternity. Praying for them is not likely to make any difference]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
sinning	sinning
sin	sinning
sinning	sinning
sin	sin
pray	pray

1 John 5:17

ULT	UST
All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not toward death.	*Every wrong thing that people do is a sin against God, but there are some sins that will not separate a person from God eternally.*

ULT **All unrighteousness is sin**
UST Every wrong thing that people do is a sin against God

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **unrighteousness** with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [Every time we do what God does not want, that is sin]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **and**
UST but

John is using the word **and** to introduce a contrasting statement that is intended to encourage the believers to whom he is writing. Alternate translation: [however,]
Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **there is sin not toward death**
UST there are some sins that will not separate a person from God eternally

See how you translated the word **death** in the previous verse. There and here, it refers to spiritual death. Alternate translation: [not every sin leads to eternal separation from God] or [not every sin causes a person to die spiritually]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
unrighteousness	wrong thing that people do
sin	sin
sin	sins

1 John 5:18

ULT	UST
We know that everyone having been begotten from God does not sin, but the one begotten from God keeps himself, and the evil one does not touch him.	*We know that everyone who has become God's spiritual son or daughter does not continually sin. Instead, those who have God as their spiritual Father are careful to keep themselves from sinning so that Satan, that evil being, does not harm them spiritually.*

ULT **everyone having been begotten from God**
UST everyone who has become God's spiritual son or daughter

See how you translated the similar expression in 2:29. Alternate translation: [everyone whose father is God]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **everyone having been begotten from God**
UST everyone who has become God's spiritual son or daughter

See whether in 2:29 you decided to explain this metaphor. Alternate translation: [everyone whose spiritual father is God]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **does not sin**
UST does not continually sin

See how you translated this expression in 3:6 and see the discussion of "sin" in Part 3 of the Introduction to 1 John. Alternate translation: [does not sin wantonly and continually]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the one begotten from God keeps himself**
UST those who have God as their spiritual Father are careful to keep themselves from sinning

Many ancient manuscripts read "the one begotten from God keeps himself." The ULT follows that reading. In this case, **the one begotten from God** refers to the believer, just as the earlier phrase, **everyone having been begotten from God**, refers to the believer. In this reading, the believer guards himself from sin. Other ancient manuscripts read "the one begotten from God keeps him." In this case, **the one begotten from God** refers to Jesus, who guards the believer from sin. If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to use the reading that it uses. See the notes in the introduction to this chapter.
Support Reference: Textual Variants

ULT **the evil one**
UST Satan, that evil being

As in 2:13, John is using the adjective **evil** as a noun in order to indicate a specific being. ULT adds **one** to show this. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [the one who is evil]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the evil one**
UST Satan, that evil being

John is speaking of the devil by association with the way that he is **evil**. Alternate translation: [the devil]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **does not touch him**
UST does not harm them spiritually

This is an idiom. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: [cannot hurt him]
Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	know
having been begotten	who has become … spiritual son or daughter
God	God's
sin	sin
begotten	as their spiritual Father
God	God
evil one	Satan

1 John 5:19

ULT	UST
We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the evil one.	*We know that we belong to God. We also know that Satan, that evil being, is controlling all the people who are unbelievers.*

ULT we are from God
UST we belong to God

See how you translated the similar expression in 4:4. Alternate translation: [we are sharing life with God] or [we are living in relationship with God]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT the whole world
UST all the people who are unbelievers

John uses the term **world** in various ways in this letter. In this instance, it likely refers both to the people living in the **world** who do not honor God and to their value system. Alternate translation: [every ungodly person along with the way that he thinks]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT lies in the evil one
UST Satan, that evil being, is controlling

The expression **lies in** represents being controlled by someone or something. Alternate translation: [is controlled by the evil one] or [is controlled by evil influences]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT the evil one
UST Satan, that evil being

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract noun **evil** by stating the meaning behind it with an equivalent expression. This could mean that: (1) John may be speaking of the devil, as in 2:13. Alternate translation: [the devil]; or (2) John may be speaking of evil influences. Alternate translation: [evil influences]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	know
God	God
world	people who are unbelievers
evil one	Satan

1 John 5:20

ULT	UST
But we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know the True One. And we are in the True One, in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.	*We also know that the Son of God has come among us and has made it possible for us to understand what is true. He did this so that we can truly know the genuine God. And we are sharing life with the genuine God, that is, with his Son, Jesus the Messiah. Jesus is truly God, and he is the one who gives us this new, eternal life.*

ULT **the Son of God**
UST the Son of God

Son of God is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **has come**
UST has come among us

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state more explicitly what this means, as you may have done in 5:6. Alternate translation: [has come to earth from God]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **has given us understanding**
UST has made it possible for us to understand what is true

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **understanding** with a verb such as "understand." Alternate translation: [has enabled us to understand]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **has given us understanding**
UST has made it possible for us to understand what is true

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly what Jesus has enabled us to understand. Alternate translation: [has enabled us to understand the truth] or [has enabled us to understand the truth about God]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the True One … the True One**
UST the genuine God … the genuine God

John is using the adjective **True** as a noun in order to indicate a specific being. ULT adds **One** to show this. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [the One who is true … the One who is true]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the True One … the True One**
UST the genuine God … the genuine God

John is speaking of God by association with the way that he is **True**. This could mean: (1) The God who is genuine, in contrast to false gods. Alternate translation: [the real God … the real God]; or (2) The God who is true in all that he says and does. Alternate translation: [God, who always tells the truth and does what he says he will do … God, who always tells the truth and does what he says he will do]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **we are in the True One, in his Son Jesus Christ**
UST we are sharing life with the genuine God, {that is,} with his Son, Jesus the Messiah

As in 2:5, John is speaking as if believers could be inside of God and Jesus. This expression describes having a close relationship with God and Jesus. Alternate translation: [we have a close relationship with the true God, with his Son Jesus Christ]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **we are in the True One, in his Son Jesus Christ**
UST we are sharing life with the genuine God, {that is,} with his Son, Jesus the Messiah

This second occurrence of **the True One** could refer to: (1) Jesus, as the rest of the clause makes clear. In this case, John is saying that both God and Jesus are the true God, and we are in both. See the UST. (2) God, just as the first occurrence of **the True One** refers to God. In this case, John is saying that we are in God because of being in Jesus. Alternate translation: [we are in the True One through being in Jesus Christ, his Son]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **his Son**
UST his Son

Son is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **This is the true God**
UST Jesus is truly God

This could refer either to: (1) Jesus, who was mentioned just before, or (2) God, who was mentioned earlier.
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the true God and eternal life**
UST truly God, and he is the one who gives us {this new,} eternal life

John is expressing a single idea by using two noun phrases connected with **and**. The phrase **eternal life** describes a quality of **the true God**, that he gives eternal life. Alternate translation: [the true God, who gives eternal life]
Support Reference: Hendiadys

> ULT **eternal life**
> UST he is the one who gives us {this new,} eternal life

As in 4:9, **eternal life** means both receiving power from God in this life to live in a new way and living forever in the presence of God after death. See how you translated the expression **eternal life** there.

Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	know
Son of God	Son of God
understanding	understand
know	know
Son	Son
Jesus	Jesus
Christ	Messiah
God	God
eternal	eternal

1 John 5:21

ULT	UST
Little children, keep yourselves from the idols.	*I say this to you who are as dear to me as though you were my own children: "Be careful that you never give yourselves to anything that is a false god."*

ULT Little children

UST I say this to you who are as dear to me as though you were my own children

See how you translated **children** in 2:1. Alternate translation: [You dear believers who are under my care]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT keep yourselves from

UST Be careful that you never give yourselves to anything that is a false god

Here, **keep yourselves from** is an idiom that means "avoid." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [have nothing to do with] or [stay away from]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT the idols

UST to anything that is a false god

Here, **idols** could mean: (1) figurative idols, that is, anything that might take the place of the real God in a person's life. Alternate translation: [to anything that might take the place of God in your life]; or (2) literal idols, that is, statues that were worshiped as if they embodied a god. Alternate translation: [to idols]

Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
idols	false god

Appendix: Translation Academy

Section Headings

Decisions about Section Headings

One of the decisions that the translation team will have to make is whether or not to use section headings. Section headings are like titles to each section of the Bible that begins a new topic. The section heading lets people know what that section is about. Some Bible translations use them, and others do not. You (the translator) may want to follow the practice of the Bible in the national language that most people use. You will also want to find out what the language community prefers.

Using section headings requires more work, because you will need either to write or to translate each one in addition to the text of the Bible. It will also make your translation of the Bible longer. But section headings can be very helpful to your readers. Section headings make it much easier to find where the Bible talks about different topics. If a person is looking for something in particular, he can just read the section headings until he finds one that introduces the topic that he wants to read about. Then he can read that section.

If you have decided to use section headings, then you will need to decide which kind to use. Again, you should find out which kind of section heading the language community prefers. You may also choose to follow the style of the national language. Be sure to use a kind of section heading that the people will understand is not part of the text that it introduces. The section heading is not a part of the Bible; it is just a guide to the different parts of the Bible. You might be able to make this clear by putting a space before and after the section heading and by using a different font (style of letters) or a different size of letters. See how the Bible in the national language does this, and test different methods with the language community.

Kinds of Section Headings

There are many different kinds of section headings. Here are some different kinds, with examples of how each one would look for Mark 2:1-12:

- Summary statement: “By healing a paralyzed man, Jesus demonstrated his authority to forgive sins as well as to heal.” This tries to summarize the main point of the section, and so it gives the most information in a full sentence.
- Explanatory comment: “Jesus heals a paralyzed man.” This is also a full sentence, but gives just enough information to remind the reader which section follows.
- Topical reference: “Cure of a paralytic.” This tries to be very short, only giving a label of a few words. This might save space, but it is probably only useful for people who already know the Bible well.
- Question: “Does Jesus have authority to heal and forgive sins?” This one creates a question that the information in the section answers. People who have a lot of questions about the Bible may find this especially helpful.
- “About” comment: “About Jesus healing a paralyzed man.” This kind of heading explicitly tells the reader what the section is about. This may be the one that makes it easiest to see that the heading is not a part of the words of the Bible.

As you can see, it is possible to make many different kinds of section headings, but they all have the same purpose. They all give the reader information about the main topic of the section of the Bible that follows. Some headings are shorter, and some headings are longer. Some give only a little information, and some give more information. You may want to experiment with the different kinds, and ask people which kind they think is most helpful for them.

1 John References:

1 John 5:1

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.

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**.

1 John References:

1 John 1:3 1 John 1:4 1 John 1:6 1 John 1:6 1 John 1:7 1 John 1:8 1 John 1:9 1 John 2:2 1 John 2:4 1 John 2:20 1 John 2:21 1 John 2:28 1 John 2:29 1 John 3:4 1 John 3:7 1 John 3:10 1 John 3:19 1 John 3:21 1 John 4:6 1 John 4:8 1 John 4:10 1 John 4:10 1 John 4:17 1 John 5:4 1 John 5:4 1 John 5:10 1 John 5:14 1 John 5:17 1 John 5:19 1 John 5:20 1 John 5:20

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.

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.

1 John References:

1 John 1:2 1 John 1:2 1 John 1:4 1 John 2:5 1 John 2:12 1 John 2:19 1 John 2:28 1 John 2:28 1 John 2:29 1 John 3:1 1 John 3:2 1 John 3:2 1 John 3:5 1 John 3:8 1 John 3:9 1 John 4:7 1 John 4:9 1 John 4:12 1 John 4:17 1 John 4:18 1 John 5:1 1 John 5:4 1 John 5:18

Statements — Other Uses

Description

Normally statements are used to give information. Sometimes they are used in the Bible for other functions.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages would not use a statement for some of the functions that statements are used for in the Bible.

Examples From the Bible

Statements are normally used to give **information**. All of the sentences in John 1:6-8 below are statements, and their function is to give information.

> There was a man who was sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness in order to testify about the light, that all might believe through him. John was not the light, but came that he might testify about the light. (John 1:6-8 ULT)

A statement can also be used as a **command** to tell someone what to do. In the examples below, the high priest used statements with the verb “will” to tell people what to do.

> He commanded them, saying, “This is what you **must** do. A third of you who come on the Sabbath **will** keep watch over the king’s house, and a third **will** be at the Sur Gate, and a third at the gate behind the guardhouse.” (2 Kings 11:5 ULT)

A statement can also be used to give **instructions**. The speaker below was not just telling Joseph about something Joseph would do in the future; he was telling Joseph what he needed to do.

> She will give birth to a son, and **you will call his name Jesus**, for he will save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21 ULT)

A statement can also be used to make a **request**. The man with leprosy was not just saying what Jesus was able to do. He was also asking Jesus to heal him.

> Behold, a leper came to him and bowed before him, saying, “Lord, if you are willing, **you are able to make me clean**.” (Matthew 8:2 ULT)

A statement can also be used to **perform** something. By telling Adam that the ground was cursed because of him, God actually cursed it.

> … **cursed is the ground** because of you; (Genesis 3:17b ULT)

By telling a man that his sins were forgiven, **Jesus forgave** the man’s sins.

> When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, “**Son, your sins are forgiven**.” (Mark 2:5 ULT)

Translation Strategies

(1) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, **use a sentence type** that would express that function.
(2) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, **add a sentence type** that would express that function.
(3) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, **use a verb form** that would express that function.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, use a sentence type that would express that function.

> She will give birth to a son, and **you will call his name Jesus**, for he will save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21 ULT)

The phrase “you will call his name Jesus” is an instruction. It can be translated using the sentence type of a normal instruction.

> She will give birth to a son. **Name him Jesus**, because he will save his people from their sins.

(2) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, add a sentence type that would express that function.

> Lord, if you are willing, **you are able to make me clean**. (Matthew 8:2 ULT)

The function of “you are able” is to make a request. In addition to the statement, a request can be added.

> Lord, you are able to make me clean. If you are willing, **please do so**.
> OR:
> Lord, if you are willing, **please heal me**. I know that you are able to do so.

(3) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, use a verb form that would express that function.

> She will give birth to a son, and **you will call his name Jesus**, for he will save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21 ULT)

> She will give birth to a son, and **you must call his name Jesus**, for he will save his people from their sins.

Son, your sins are forgiven. (Mark 2:5 ULT)

> Son, I forgive your sins.
> OR:
> Son, God hereby forgives your sins.

1 John References:

1 John 5:16

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.

Description

Negative words are words that have in them the meaning "not." Examples in English are "no," "not," "none," "no one," "nothing," "nowhere," "never," "nor," "neither," and "without." Also, some words have prefixes or suffixes that mean "not," such as the bolded parts of these words: "**un**happy," "**im**possible," and "use**less**." Some other kinds of words also have a negative meaning, such as "lack" or "reject," or even "fight" or "evil."

A double negative occurs when a clause has two words that each have a negative meaning.

> We did this **not** because we have **no** authority … (2 Thessalonians 3:9a ULT)
>
> And this was **not** done **without** an oath! (Hebrews 7:20a ULT)
>
> Be sure of this—the wicked person will **not** go **un**punished. (Proverbs 11:21a ULT)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Double negatives mean very different things in different languages.

- In some languages, such as English, a second negative in a clause cancels the first one, creating a positive sentence. So, "He is not unintelligent" means "He is intelligent."
- In some languages, such as French and Spanish, two negative words in a clause do not cancel each other to become a positive. The Spanish sentence, "No vi a nadie," literally says "I did not see no one." It has both the word 'no' next to the verb and 'nadie,' which means "no one." The two negatives are seen as in agreement with each other, and the sentence means, "I did not see anyone."
- In some languages, a double negative creates a stronger negative statement.
- In some languages, a double negative creates a positive sentence, but it is a weak statement. So, "He is not unintelligent" means, "He is somewhat intelligent."
- In some languages, including the languages of the Bible, a double negative can produce a stronger positive meaning than a simple positive statement. So, "He is not unintelligent" can mean "He is very intelligent." In this case, the double negative is actually the figure of speech called litotes.

Biblical Greek can do all of the above. So to translate sentences with double negatives accurately and clearly in your language, you need to know what each double negative means in the Bible and how to express the same idea in your language.

Examples From the Bible

The Greek of John 15:5 says:

> χωρὶς ἐμοῦ **οὐ** δύνασθε ποιεῖν **οὐδέν**
>
> Without me **not** you can do **nothing**

We cannot reproduce this double negative in the English ULT because in English, a second negative in a clause cancels the first one. In English, and perhaps in your language, we need to choose only one of the negatives and say either:

Without me, you can do **nothing**.
or:
Without me, you **cannot** do anything.

> … in order **not** to be **unfruitful**. (Titus 3:14b ULT)

This means "in order to be fruitful."

> A prophet is **not without** honor (Mark 6:4 ULT)

This means "a prophet is honored."

> I do **not** want you to be **ignorant**. (1 Corinthians 12:1)

This means "I want you to be knowledgeable."

Translation Strategies

If the way that the double negative is used in the Bible is natural and has the same meaning as in your language, consider using it in the same way. Otherwise, you could consider these strategies:

(1) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives so that it is positive.
(2) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives.
(3) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a stronger negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives and add a strengthening word.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives so that it is positive.

> For we do **not** have a high priest who **cannot** feel sympathy for our weaknesses. (Hebrews 4:15a ULT)
>
> > "For we have a high priest who can feel sympathy for our weaknesses."

> … in order **not** to be **unfruitful**. (Titus 3:14b ULT)
>
> > "… so that they may be fruitful."

(2) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives.

> 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

1 John References:

1 John 1:5 1 John 2:21 1 John 2:21 1 John 2:22 1 John 3:10 1 John 3:15 1 John 4:20

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.

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!"

1 John References:

1 John 3:6 1 John 3:18

Ellipsis

Description

An ellipsis[^1] 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

1. 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.

2. 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:

> > He makes Lebanon skip like a calf and **he makes** Sirion **skip** like a young ox.
>
> Watch carefully, therefore, how you walk —**not as unwise but as wise**. (Ephesians 5:15b ULT)

The information that the reader must understand in the second parts of these sentences can be filled in from the first parts:

> > Watch carefully, therefore, how you walk—**walk** not as unwise but **walk** as wise,

Absolute Ellipsis

> Then when he had come near, he asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” And so he said, “Lord, **that I might recover my sight**.” (Luke 18:40b-41 ULT)

It seems that the man answered in an incomplete sentence because he wanted to be polite and not directly ask Jesus for healing. He knew that Jesus would understand that the only way he could receive his sight would be for Jesus to heal him. The complete sentence would be:

> > “Lord, **I want you to heal me so** that I might receive my sight.”
>
> To Titus, a true son in our common faith. Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. (Titus 1:4 ULT)

The writer assumes that the reader will recognize this common form of a blessing or wish, so he does not need to include the full sentence, which would be:

> > To Titus, a true son in our common faith. **May you receive** grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

Translation Strategies

If ellipsis would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option:

(1) Add the missing words to the incomplete phrase or sentence.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Add the missing words to the incomplete phrase or sentence.

> So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor **sinners in the assembly** of the righteous. (Psalm 1:5 ULT)
>
> > So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, and **sinners will not stand in the assembly** of the righteous.
>
> Then when he had come near, he asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” And so he said, “Lord, **that I might recover my sight**.” (Luke 18:40b-41 ULT)
>
> > Then when the man was near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, **I want you to heal me** that I might receive my sight.”
>
> He makes Lebanon skip like a calf **and Sirion like a young ox**. (Psalm 29:6 ULT)
>
> > He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and **he makes** Sirion **skip** like a young ox.

1 John References:

1 John 2:2 1 John 2:15 1 John 2:17 1 John 2:19 1 John 2:21 1 John 3:10 1 John 3:12 1 John 3:12 1 John 3:14 1 John 3:18 1 John 3:24 1 John 4:1 1 John 4:13 1 John 4:15 1 John 5:9

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.

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.

1 John References:

1 John Introduction 1 John 1:1 1 John 1:2 1 John 1:3 1 John 1:3 1 John 1:4 1 John 1:5 1 John 4:6 1 John 4:6 1 John 4:9 1 John 4:14 1 John 4:16

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.

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, briers 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 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 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.

1 John References:

1 John Introduction

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.

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.

1 John References:

1 John 1:1 1 John 1:1 1 John 1:1 1 John 1:3 1 John 1:4 1 John 1:9 1 John 1:10 1 John 2:1 1 John 2:1 1 John 2:1 1 John 2:3 1 John 2:4 1 John 2:6 1 John 2:7 1 John 2:8 1 John 2:8 1 John 2:10 1 John 2:12 1 John 2:13 1 John 2:14 1 John 2:14 1 John 2:16 1 John 2:19 1 John 2:19 1 John 2:20 1 John 2:21 1 John 2:22 1 John 2:23 1 John 2:23 1 John 2:24 1 John 2:24 1 John 2:26 1 John 2:27 1 John 3:1 1 John 3:2 1 John 3:4 1 John 3:6 1 John 3:7 1 John 3:8 1 John 3:9 1 John 3:12 1 John 3:19 1 John 3:20 1 John 3:20 1 John 3:21 1 John 3:21 1 John 3:22 1 John 4:1 1 John 4:3 1 John 4:3 1 John 4:13 1 John 4:15 1 John 4:17 1 John 4:17 1 John 4:18 1 John 4:18 1 John 4:18 1 John 4:18 1 John 4:19 1 John 4:20 1 John 5:1 1 John 5:3 1 John 5:6 1 John 5:7 1 John 5:9 1 John 5:10 1 John 5:10 1 John 5:10 1 John 5:14 1 John 5:15 1 John 5:16 1 John 5:18 1 John 5:20

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.

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.

1 John References:

1 John 1:1 1 John 1:1

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)

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."

1 John References:

1 John 2:9 1 John 2:13 1 John 2:14 1 John 3:24 1 John 5:9

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.

> 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."

1 John References:

1 John 2:4 1 John 2:9 1 John 2:10 1 John 2:17 1 John 2:22 1 John 4:21 1 John 5:10

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.

> … 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**.

1 John References:

1 John 3:18 1 John 5:20

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.

1. The speaker means this as literally true if he means that it really does rain here every night.
2. The speaker means this as a **generalization** if he means that it rains here most nights.
3. 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.

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

1. Readers need to be able to understand whether or not a statement is literally true.
2. 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.

1 John References:

1 John 2:27 1 John 3:18

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.

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.

1 John References:

1 John 1:6 1 John 1:7 1 John 1:8 1 John 1:9 1 John 1:10 1 John 2:1 1 John 2:4 1 John 2:5 1 John 2:9 1 John 2:10 1 John 2:15 1 John 3:17 1 John 3:20 1 John 3:21 1 John 4:15 1 John 4:20 1 John 5:16

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.")

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**

1 John References:

1 John 1:1 1 John 2:3 1 John 2:3 1 John 2:4 1 John 2:5 1 John 2:7 1 John 2:8 1 John 2:13 1 John 2:14 1 John 2:17 1 John 2:18 1 John 2:24 1 John 3:1 1 John 3:8 1 John 3:8 1 John 3:10 1 John 3:10 1 John 3:10 1 John 3:11 1 John 3:12 1 John 3:16 1 John 3:16 1 John 3:17 1 John 3:19 1 John 3:19 1 John 3:22 1 John 3:24 1 John 3:24 1 John 4:2 1 John 4:2 1 John 4:3 1 John 4:4 1 John 4:5 1 John 4:6 1 John 4:6 1 John 4:6 1 John 4:6 1 John 4:6 1 John 4:6 1 John 4:7 1 John 4:7 1 John 4:8 1 John 4:9 1 John 4:10 1 John 4:13 1 John 4:16 1 John 4:17 1 John 4:17 1 John 5:2 1 John 5:2 1 John 5:3 1 John 5:8 1 John 5:9 1 John 5:14 1 John 5:15 1 John 5:18 1 John 5:19 1 John 5:21

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.

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!

1 John References:

1 John 1:1 1 John 2:3 1 John 3:18

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.

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.

1 John References:

1 John 1:1 1 John 1:5 1 John 1:5 1 John 1:6 1 John 1:6 1 John 1:7 1 John 1:7 1 John 1:7 1 John 1:7 1 John 1:8 1 John 1:8 1 John 1:9 1 John 1:10 1 John 2:1 1 John 2:4 1 John 2:5 1 John 2:5 1 John 2:6 1 John 2:6 1 John 2:6 1 John 2:8 1 John 2:8 1 John 2:9 1 John 2:9 1 John 2:9 1 John 2:10 1 John 2:10 1 John 2:10 1 John 2:10 1 John 2:11 1 John 2:11 1 John 2:11 1 John 2:11 1 John 2:11 1 John 2:12 1 John 2:13 1 John 2:13 1 John 2:13 1 John 2:14 1 John 2:14 1 John 2:14 1 John 2:14 1 John 2:14 1 John 2:14 1 John 2:17 1 John 2:17 1 John 2:18 1 John 2:19 1 John 2:19 1 John 2:20 1 John 2:24 1 John 2:24 1 John 2:25 1 John 2:26 1 John 2:27 1 John 2:27 1 John 2:27 1 John 2:27 1 John 2:27 1 John 2:28 1 John 2:28 1 John 2:29 1 John 3:1 1 John 3:1 1 John 3:5 1 John 3:6 1 John 3:6 1 John 3:6 1 John 3:7 1 John 3:7 1 John 3:9 1 John 3:9 1 John 3:9 1 John 3:10 1 John 3:13 1 John 3:14 1 John 3:14 1 John 3:14 1 John 3:14 1 John 3:15 1 John 3:15 1 John 3:15 1 John 3:16 1 John 3:16 1 John 3:17 1 John 3:17 1 John 3:18 1 John 3:19 1 John 3:19 1 John 3:20 1 John 3:22 1 John 3:24 1 John 3:24 1 John 3:24 1 John 3:24 1 John 4:4 1 John 4:4 1 John 4:4 1 John 4:7 1 John 4:8 1 John 4:9 1 John 4:12 1 John 4:13 1 John 4:15 1 John 4:16 1 John 4:16 1 John 4:16 1 John 4:18 1 John 4:20 1 John 4:21 1 John 5:1 1 John 5:2 1 John 5:3 1 John 5:4 1 John 5:4 1 John 5:4 1 John 5:5 1 John 5:6 1 John 5:6 1 John 5:10 1 John 5:11 1 John 5:11 1 John 5:12 1 John 5:12 1 John 5:13 1 John 5:16 1 John 5:16 1 John 5:16 1 John 5:17 1 John 5:18 1 John 5:19 1 John 5:20 1 John 5:20 1 John 5:20 1 John 5:21 1 John 5:21

Metonymy

Description

Metonymy is a figure of speech in which an item (either physical or abstract) is called not by its own name, but by the name of something closely associated with it. A metonym is a word or phrase used as a substitute for something that it is associated with.

> … 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.

1 John References:

1 John 1:2 1 John 1:2 1 John 1:7 1 John 1:10 1 John 2:2 1 John 2:5 1 John 2:7 1 John 2:8 1 John 2:12 1 John 2:13 1 John 2:14 1 John 2:14 1 John 2:15 1 John 2:15 1 John 2:16 1 John 2:16 1 John 2:16 1 John 2:16 1 John 2:17 1 John 2:21 1 John 3:1 1 John 3:12 1 John 3:13 1 John 3:17 1 John 3:18 1 John 3:19 1 John 3:23 1 John 4:1 1 John 4:1 1 John 4:2 1 John 4:2 1 John 4:3 1 John 4:3 1 John 4:3 1 John 4:4 1 John 4:5 1 John 4:5 1 John 4:6 1 John 4:9 1 John 4:14 1 John 4:17 1 John 5:4 1 John 5:4 1 John 5:4 1 John 5:5 1 John 5:6 1 John 5:8 1 John 5:13 1 John 5:18 1 John 5:19 1 John 5:20

Nominal Adjectives

Description

In some languages an adjective can be used to refer to a class of things that the adjective describes. When it does, it acts like a noun. For example, the word “rich” is an adjective. Here are two sentences that show that “rich” is an adjective.

> **The rich man** had huge numbers of flocks and herds. (2 Samuel 12:2 ULT)

The adjective “rich” comes before the word “man” and describes “man.”

> **He will not be rich**; his wealth will not last. (Job 15:29a ULT)

The adjective “rich” comes after the verb “be” and describes “He.”

Here is a sentence that shows that “rich” can also function as a noun.

> **The rich** must not give more than the half shekel, and **the poor** must not give less. (Exodus 30:15b ULT)

In Exodus 30:15, the word “rich” acts as a noun in the phrase “the rich,” and it refers to rich people. The word “poor” also acts as a noun and refers to poor people.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Many times in the Bible adjectives are used as nouns to describe a group of people.
- Some languages do not use adjectives in this way.
- Readers of these languages may think that the text is talking about one particular person when it is really talking about the group of people whom the adjective describes.

Examples From the Bible

> The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of **the righteous**. (Psalms 125:3a ULT)

“The righteous” here are people who are righteous, not one particular righteous person.

> Blessed are **the meek**. (Matthew 5:5a ULT)

“The meek” here are all people who are meek, not one particular meek person.

Translation Strategies

If your language uses adjectives as nouns to refer to a class of people, consider using the adjectives in this way. If it would sound strange, or if the meaning would be unclear or wrong, here is another option:

(1) Use the adjective with a plural form of the noun that the adjective describes.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use the adjective with a plural form of the noun that the adjective describes.

> 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**.

1 John References:

1 John 2:1 1 John 2:7 1 John 2:13 1 John 2:14 1 John 2:20 1 John 3:2 1 John 3:12 1 John 3:21 1 John 3:22 1 John 4:1 1 John 4:7 1 John 4:9 1 John 4:11 1 John 5:18 1 John 5:20

Parallelism

Description

Parallelism is a poetic device in which two phrases or clauses that are similar in structure or idea are used together. The following are some of the different kinds of parallelism.

- The second clause or phrase means the same as the first. This is called synonymous parallelism.
- The second clarifies or strengthens the meaning of the first.
- The second completes what is said in the first.
- The second says something that contrasts with the first, but adds to the same idea.

Parallelism is most commonly found in Old Testament poetry, such as in the books of Psalms and Proverbs. It also occurs in Greek in the New Testament, both in the four gospels and in the apostles' letters.

This article will only discuss synonymous parallelism, the kind in which the two parallel phrases mean the same thing, because that is the kind that presents a problem for translation. Note that we use the term "synonymous parallelism" for long phrases or clauses that have the same meaning. We use the term "doublet" for words or very short phrases that mean basically the same thing and are used together.

In the poetry of the original languages, synonymous parallelism has several effects:

- It shows that something is very important by saying it more than once and in more than one way.
- It helps the hearer to think more deeply about the idea by saying it in different ways.
- It makes the language more beautiful and raises it above the ordinary way of speaking.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages would not use synonymous parallelism. They would either think it odd that someone said the same thing twice, or, since it is in the Bible, they would think that the two phrases must have some difference in meaning. For them it would be confusing, rather than beautiful. They would not understand that the repetition of the idea in different words serves to emphasize the idea.

Examples From the Bible

> Your word is a lamp to my feet
>
> and a light for my path. (Psalm 119:105 ULT)

Both parts of the sentence are metaphors saying that God's word teaches people how to live. That is the single idea. The words "lamp" and "light" are similar in meaning because they refer to light. The words "my feet" and "my path" are related because they refer to a person walking. Walking is a metaphor for living.

> You make him to rule over the works of your hands;
>
> you have put all things under his feet (Psalm 8:6 ULT)

Both lines say that God made man the ruler of everything. "To rule over" is the same idea as putting things "under his feet," and "the works of your [God's] hands" is the same idea as "all things."

> 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.

1 John References:

1 John 1:1 1 John 1:2 1 John 1:5 1 John 1:6 1 John 1:9 1 John 2:4 1 John 2:11 1 John 2:14 1 John 2:28 1 John 3:19 1 John 3:20

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.

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.

1 John References:

1 John 3:15 1 John 4:18 1 John 5:7

Possession

Description

In English, the grammatical form that commonly indicates possession is also used to indicate a variety of relationships between people and objects or people and other people. In English, that grammatical relationship is shown by using the word "**of**," by using **an apostrophe and the letter "s"**, or by using a **possessive pronoun**. The following examples are different ways to indicate that my grandfather owns a house.

- the house **of** my grandfather
- my **grandfather's** house
- **his** house

Possession is used in Hebrew, Greek, and English for a variety of situations. Here are a few common situations that it is used for.

- Ownership — Someone owns something.

> The clothes of me - my clothes — The clothes that I own

- Social Relationship — Someone has some kind of social relationship with another.

> The mother of John — John's mother - the woman who gave birth to John, or the woman who cared for John

> A teacher of Israel - Israel's teacher — a person who teaches Israel

- Association — A particular thing is associated with a particular person, place, or thing.

> The sickness of David - David's sickness — the sickness that David is experiencing

> the fear of the Lord — the fear that is appropriate for a human being to have when relating to the Lord

- Contents — Something has something in it.

> a bag of clothes — a bag that has clothes in it, or a bag that is full of clothes

- Part and whole: One thing is part of another.

> my head — the head that is part of my body

> the roof of a house — the roof that is part of a house

In some languages there is a special form of possession, termed **inalienable possession.** This form of possession is used for things that cannot be removed from you, as opposed to things you could lose. In the examples above, *my head* and *my mother* are examples of inalienable possession (at least in some languages), while *my clothes* or *my teacher* would be alienably possessed. What may be considered alienable vs. inalienable may differ by language. 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**.

1 John References:

1 John 1:1 1 John 2:5 1 John 2:15 1 John 2:17 1 John 2:23 1 John 3:17 1 John 3:20 1 John 3:21 1 John 4:9 1 John 5:3

Direct and Indirect Quotations

Description

There are two kinds of quotations: direct quotations and indirect quotations.

A direct quotation occurs when someone reports what another person said from the viewpoint of that original speaker. People usually expect that this kind of quotation will represent the original speaker's exact words. In the example below, John would have said "I" when referring to himself, so the narrator, who is reporting John's words, uses the word "I" in the quotation to refer to John. To show that these are John's exact words, many languages put the words between quotation marks: "".

- John said, "**I** do not know at what time **I** will arrive."

An indirect quotation occurs when a speaker reports what someone else said, but in this case, the speaker is reporting it from his own point of view instead and not from the original person's point of view. This kind of quotation usually contains changes in pronouns, and it often includes changes in time, in word choices, and in length. In the example below, the narrator refers to John as "he" in the quotation and uses the word "would" to replace the future tense, indicated by "will."

- John said that **he** did not know at what time **he** would arrive.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In some languages, reported speech can be expressed by either direct or indirect quotations. In other languages, it is more natural to use one than the other. There may be a certain meaning implied by using one rather than the other. So for each quotation, translators need to decide whether it is best to translate it as a direct quotation or as an indirect quotation.

Examples From the Bible

The verses in the examples below contain both direct and indirect quotations. In the explanation below the verse, we have marked in bold the words that are quoted.

> And he commanded him to tell no one, but, "Go, show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them." (Luke 5:14 ULT)

- Indirect quote: He commanded him **to tell no one**,
- Direct quote: but told him, "**Go, show yourself to the priest …**"

> And being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, he answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with careful observation. Neither will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is among you." (Luke 17:20-21 ULT)

- Indirect quote: Being asked by the Pharisees **when the kingdom of God was coming,**
- Direct quote: he answered them and said, "**The kingdom of God is not coming with careful observation. Neither will they say, 'Look. here it is!' or 'There it is!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is among you.**"
- Direct quotes: Neither will they say, '**Look, here it is!**' or, '**There it is!**'

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.

1 John References:

1 John 5:11

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.

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 orignal 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?

1 John References:

1 John 2:22 1 John 3:12 1 John 3:17 1 John 5:5

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 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

1 John References:

1 John 2:28

Verbs

Description

Verbs are words that refer to an action or event or that is used in describing or identifying things. An "action" is something you do. "Event" is more general than "action." "Events" are things that happen, such as death. A linking verb ("is") describes a condition of being.

Examples The verbs in the examples below are bolded.

- John **ran**. ("Run" is an action.)
- John **ate** a banana. ("Eat" is an action.)
- John **saw** Mark. ("See" is an event.)
- John **died.** ("Die" is an event.)
- John **is** tall. (The phrase "is tall" describes John. The word "is" is a verb that links "John" with "tall.")
- John **looks** handsome. (The phrase "is handsome" describes John. The word "looks" here is a verb that links "John" with "handsome.")
- John **is** my brother. (The phrase "is my brother" identifies John.)

People or Things Associated With a Verb

A verb usually says something about someone or something. All of the example sentences above say something about John. "John" is the **subject** of those sentences. In English the subject usually comes before the verb.

Sometimes there is another person or thing associated with the verb. In the examples below, the bolded word is the verb, and the quoted phrase is the **object**. In English the object usually comes after the verb.

- He **ate** "lunch."
- He **sang** "a song."
- He **read** "a book."
- **He saw** "the book."

Some verbs never have an object.

- The sun **rose** at six o'clock.
- John **slept** well.
- John **fell** yesterday.

For many verbs in English, where the object is not important in the sentence, the object may not be stated.

- He never **eats** at night.
- He **sings** all the time.
- He **reads** well.
- He cannot **see**.

In some languages, a verb that needs an object must always take one, even if the object is not very important. People who speak those languages might restate the sentences above like this.

- He never **eats food** at night.
- He **sings songs** all the time.
- He **reads words** well.
- He cannot **see anything**.

Subject and Object Marking on Verbs

In some languages, the form of the verb may vary depending on the persons or things associated with it. For example, English speakers sometimes put "s" at the end of the verb when the subject is just one person. In other languages, marking on the verb may show whether the subject is "I," "you," or "he"; singular, dual, or plural; male or female, or human or non-human.

- They **eat** bananas every day. (The subject "they" is more than one person.)
- John **eats** bananas every day. (The subject "John" is one person.)

Time and Tense

When we tell about an event, we usually tell whether it is in the past, the present, or the future. Sometimes we do this with words like "yesterday," "now," or "tomorrow."

In some languages the verb may be a little bit different depending on the time associated with it. This kind of marking on a verb is called "tense." English speakers sometimes put "ed" at the end of the verb when the event happened in the past.

- Sometimes Mary **cooks** meat.
- Yesterday Mary **cooked** meat. (She did this in the past.)

In some languages speakers might add a word to tell something about the time. English speakers use the word "will" when the verb refers to something in the future.

- Tomorrow Mary **will cook** meat.

Aspect

When we tell about an event, sometimes we want to show how the event progressed over a period of time or how the event relates to another event. This is called "aspect." English speakers sometimes use the verbs "is" or "has" then add "s," "ing," or "ed" to the end of the verb in order to show how the event relates to another event or to the present time.

- Mary **cooks** meat every day. (This tells about something Mary often does.)
- Mary **is cooking** the meat. (This tells about something Mary is in the process of doing right now.)
- Mary **cooked** the meat, and John **came** home. (This simply tells about things that Mary and John did.)
- While Mary **was cooking** the meat, John came home. (This tells about something Mary was in the process of doing when John came home)
- Mary **has cooked** the meat, and she wants us to come eat it. (This tells about something Mary did that is still relevant now.)
- Mary **had cooked** the meat by the time John came home. (This tells about something that Mary completed in the past before something else happened.)

1 John References:

1 John 2:14

Forms of You

Singular, Dual, and Plural

Some languages have more than one word for "you" based on how many people the word "you" refers to. The **singular** form refers to one person, and the **plural** form refers to more than one person. Some languages also have a **dual** form which refers to two people, and some languages have other forms that refer to three or four people.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_younum.

Sometimes in the Bible a speaker uses a singular form of "you" even though he is speaking to a crowd. 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.

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.

1 John References:

1 John 1:2 1 John 1:4

Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions

Conditional Relationships

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**!"

1 John References:

1 John 2:19

Connect — Factual Conditions

Conditional Relationships

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?"

1 John References:

1 John 2:3 1 John 2:29 1 John 4:11 1 John 4:11 1 John 4:12 1 John 5:9 1 John 5:15

Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

Conditional Relationships

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;

1 John References:

1 John 2:24

Connect — Exception Clauses

Exceptional Relationship

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.

1 John References:

1 John 2:21 1 John 5:6

Connect — Contrast Relationship

Logical Relationships

Some connectors establish logical relationships between two phrases, clauses, sentences, or chunks of text.

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.

1 John References:

1 John 1:6 1 John 2:1 1 John 2:4 1 John 2:5 1 John 2:9 1 John 2:20 1 John 3:2 1 John 4:13 1 John 4:20 1 John 5:17

Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Logical Relationships

Some connectors establish logical relationships between two phrases, clauses, sentences, or chunks of text.

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.

1 John References:

1 John 1:3 1 John 2:3 1 John 2:8 1 John 2:11 1 John 2:27 1 John 3:1 1 John 3:2 1 John 3:13 1 John 3:14 1 John 4:8 1 John 4:17 1 John 4:18 1 John 4:19 1 John 5:3

Connecting Words and Phrases

Description

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.

1 John References:

1 John 2:28 1 John 5:9

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)

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.")

1 John References:

1 John 1:2 1 John 1:3 1 John 1:7 1 John 2:1 1 John 2:14 1 John 2:15 1 John 2:16 1 John 2:22 1 John 2:23 1 John 2:23 1 John 2:24 1 John 3:1 1 John 3:8 1 John 3:23 1 John 4:9 1 John 4:10 1 John 4:14 1 John 4:15 1 John 5:5 1 John 5:9 1 John 5:10 1 John 5:11 1 John 5:12 1 John 5:13 1 John 5:20 1 John 5:20

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.

Meaning of names

Most names in the Bible have meaning. Most of the time, names in the Bible are used simply to identify the people and places they refer to, but sometimes the meaning of a name is especially important.

> For this **Melchizedek**, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, was the one who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him. (Hebrews 7:1 ULT)

Here the writer uses the name "Melchizedek" primarily to refer to a man who had that name, and the title "king of Salem" tells us that he ruled over a certain city.

> His name first indeed means "king of righteousness," and then also "king of Salem," that is, "king of peace." (Hebrews 7:2b ULT)

Here the writer explains the meanings of Melchizedek's name and title because those things tell us more about the person. Other times, the writer does not explain the meaning of a name because he expects the reader to already know the meaning. If the meaning of the name is important to understand the passage, you can include the meaning in the text or in a footnote.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Readers may not know some of the names in the Bible. They may not know whether a name refers to a person or place or something else.
- Readers may need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand the passage.
- Some names may have different sounds or combinations of sounds that are not used in your language or are unpleasant to say in your language. For strategies to address this problem, see Borrow Words.
- Some people and places in the Bible have two names. Readers may not realize that two names refer to the same person or place.

Examples From the Bible

> Then you crossed over the **Jordan** and came to **Jericho**, and the men of Jericho, and the **Amorites** … fought against you, but I gave them into your hand. (Joshua 24:11 ULT)

Readers might not know that "Jordan" is the name of a river, "Jericho" is the name of a city, and "Amorites" is the name of a group of people.

> She said, "Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?" Therefore, the well was called **Beer Lahai Roi**. (Genesis 16:13b-14a ULT)

Readers may not understand the second sentence if they do not know that "Beer Lahai Roi" means "Well of the Living One who sees me."

> And she called his name **Moses** and she said, "For out of the water I drew him." (Exodus 2:10b ULT)

Readers may not understand why she said this if they do not know that the name Moses sounds like the Hebrew words "pull out."

> **Saul** was in agreement with his execution. (Acts 8:1a ULT)
>
> But when the apostles, Barnabas and **Paul**, heard of it, they tore their clothing. (Acts 14:14a ULT)

Readers may not know that the names Saul and Paul refer to the same person.

Translation Strategies

(1) If readers cannot easily understand from the context what kind of a thing a name refers to, you can add a word to clarify it.
(2) If readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, copy the name and tell about its meaning either in the text or in a footnote.
(3) Or if readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, and that name is used only once, translate the meaning of the name instead of copying the name.
(4) If a person or place has two different names, use one name most of the time and the other name only when the text tells about the person or place having more than one name or when it says something about why the person or place was given that name. Write a footnote when the source text uses the name that is used less frequently.
(5) Or if a person or place has two different names, then use whatever name is given in the source text, and add a footnote that gives the other name.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If readers cannot easily understand from the context what kind of a thing a name refers to, you can add a word to clarify it.

> Then you crossed over the **Jordan** and came to **Jericho**, and the men of Jericho, and the **Amorites** … fought against you, but I gave them into your hand. (Joshua 24:11 ULT)
>
> > You went over the **Jordan River** and came to the **city of Jericho**. The men of Jericho fought against you, along with **the tribe of the Amorites.**
>
> At that hour, certain Pharisees approached, saying to him, “Leave and go away from here, because **Herod** wants to kill you.” (Luke 13:31 ULT)
>
> > At that hour, certain Pharisees approached, saying to him, “Go and leave here, because **King Herod** wants to kill you.”

(2) If readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, copy the name and tell about its meaning either in the text or in a footnote.

> And she called his name **Moses** and she said, “For out of the water I drew him.” (Exodus 2:10b ULT)
>
> > She called his name **Moses (which sounds like ‘drawn out’),** and she said, “For out of the water I drew him.”

(3) Or if readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, and that name is used only once, translate the meaning of the name instead of copying the name.

> She said, “Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?” Therefore, the well was called **Beer Lahai Roi**. (Genesis 16:13b-14a ULT)
>
> > She said, “Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?” Therefore, the well was called **Well of the Living One who sees me**.

(4) If a person or place has two different names, use one name most of the time and the other name only when the text tells about the person or place having more than one name or when it says something about why

the person or place was given that name. Write a footnote when the source text uses the name that is used less frequently. For example, Paul is called “Saul” before Acts 13 and “Paul” after Acts 13. You could translate his name as “Paul” all of the time, except in Acts 13:9 where it talks about him having both names.

> … a young man named **Saul**. (Acts 7:58b ULT)
>
> > … a young man named **Paul** 1

The footnote would look like:

> > [1] Most versions say “Saul” here, but most of the time in the Bible he is called “Paul.”

Then later in the story, you could translate this way:

> But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit; (Acts 13:9)
>
> > But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit;

(5) Or if a person or place has two names, use whatever name is given in the source text, and add a footnote that gives the other name. For example, you could write “Saul” where the source text has “Saul” and “Paul” where the source text has “Paul.”

> a young man named **Saul** (Acts 7:58 ULT)
>
> > a young man named **Saul**

The footnote would look like:

> > [1] This is the same man who is called Paul beginning in Acts 13.

Then later in the story, you could translate this way:

> But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit; (Acts 13:9)
>
> > But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit;

Then after the story has explained the name change, you could translate this way.

> It came about in Iconium that **Paul** and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue (Acts 14:1 ULT)
>
> > It came about in Iconium that **Paul**[1] and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue

The footnote would look like:

> > [1] This is the same man who was called Saul before Acts 13.

1 John References:

1 John Introduction

Textual Variants

Description

Thousands of years ago, people wrote the books of the Bible. Other people then copied them by hand and translated them. They did this work very carefully, and over the years many people made thousands of copies. However, people who looked at them later saw that there were small differences between them. Some copiers accidentally left out some words, or some mistook one word for another that looked like it. Occasionally, they added words or even whole sentences, either by accident or because they wanted to explain something. Modern Bibles are translations of the old copies. Some modern Bibles include some of these sentences that were added. In the ULT, these added sentences are usually written in footnotes.

Bible scholars have read many old copies and compared them with each other. For each place in the Bible where there was a difference, they have figured out which wordings are most likely correct. The translators of the ULT based the ULT New Testament on wordings that scholars say are most likely correct. The ULT Old Testament is based on the Westminster Leningrad Codex, which is considered to be the best representative of the ancient copies. 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.

> [10] See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I say to you that in heaven their angels always look on the face of my Father who is in heaven. [11] [1]
>
> [1] Many authorities, some ancient, insert v. 11: **For the Son of Man came to save that which was lost.**

John 7:53-8:11 is not in the best earliest copies. It has been included in the ULT, but it is marked off with square brackets ([ ]) at the beginning and end, and there is a footnote after verse 11.

> 53 [Then everyone went to his own house … 11 She said, “No one, Lord.” Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more.”] [2]
>
> [2] Some ancient manuscripts include John 7:53-8:11

Psalm 100:3 ULT follows the Westminster Leningrad Codex. It says:

> Know that Yahweh, he {is} God; he, he made us, **and not we**,

There are some other ancient copies that say:

> Know that Yahweh, he {is} God; he, he made us, **and we are his**,

There is an unfoldingWord® Translation Note at that place to tell the translator about this other reading and that either one is an acceptable choice.

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 a footnote about the alternate reading such as the one that the ULT provides or one in the unfoldingWord® Translation Notes.

(2) Translate the verses as another version has them, and change the footnote so that it fits this situation.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

The translation strategies are applied to Mark 7:14-16 ULT, which has a footnote about verse 16.

> 14 He called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand. 15 There is nothing from outside the man that can defile him when it enters into him. But the things that come out of the man are the things that defile the man.” 16 [1]
>
> [1] Some ancient manuscripts include verse 16: **If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.**

(1) Translate the verses as they are in the ULT and include the footnote that the ULT provides.

> 14 He called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand. 15 There is nothing from outside the man that can defile him when it enters into him. But the things that come out of the man are the things that defile the man.” 16 [1]
>
> [1] Some ancient manuscripts include verse 16: **If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.**

(2) Translate the verses as another version has them, and change the footnote so that it fits this situation.

> 14 He called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand. 15There is nothing from outside the man that can defile him when it enters into him. But the things that come out of the man are the things that defile the man. 16 If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.” [1]
>
> [1] Some ancient manuscripts do not include verse 16.

1 John References:

1 John Introduction 1 John 1 Introduction 1 John 1:4 1 John 2 Introduction 1 John 2:14 1 John 2:20 1 John 3 Introduction 1 John 3:1 1 John 4 Introduction 1 John 4:3 1 John 5 Introduction 1 John 5:7 1 John 5:18

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?"

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**

1 John References:

1 John 2:18 1 John 2:20

Verse Bridges

Description

In some cases, you will see in the unfoldingWord® Simplified Text (UST) that two or more verse numbers are combined, such as 17-18. This is called a verse bridge. This means that the information in the verses was rearranged so that the story or message could be more easily understood.

> 29 These were the clans of the Horites: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, and Anah, 30 Dishon, Ezer, Dishan: these are clans of the Horites, according to their clan lists in the land of Seir. (Genesis 36:29-30 ULT)

> 29-30 The people groups who were descendants of Hor lived in Seir land. The names of the people groups are Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. (Genesis 36:29-30 UST)

In the ULT text, verses 29 and 30 are separate, and the information about the people living in Seir is at the end of verse 30. In the UST text, the verses are joined, and the information about them living in Seir is at the beginning. For many languages, this is a more logical order of information.

Examples From the Bible

Where the UST has a verse bridge, the ULT will have separate verses.

> 4-5 Yahweh our God will bless you in the land that he is giving to you. If you obey Yahweh our God and obey all the commandments that I am giving to you today, there will not be any poor people among you. (Deuteronomy 15:4-5 UST)

> 4 However, there should be no poor among you (for Yahweh will surely bless you in the land that he gives you as an inheritance to possess), 5 if only you diligently listen to the voice of Yahweh your God, to keep all these commandments that I am commanding you today. (Deuteronomy 15:4-5 ULT)

> 16-17 But Yahweh said to him, “I will not permit you to eat the fruit of the tree that will enable you to know what actions are good to do and what actions are evil to do. If you eat any fruit from that tree, on the day you eat it you will surely die. But I will permit you to eat the fruit of any of the other trees in the park.” (Genesis 2:16-17 UST)

> 16 Yahweh God commanded the man, saying, “From every tree in the garden you may freely eat. 17 But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you may not eat, for on the day that you eat from it, you will surely die.” (Genesis 2:16-17 ULT)

Translation Strategies

Order the information in a way that will be clear to your readers. If the order of information is clear as it is in the ULT, then use that order. But if the order is confusing or gives the wrong meaning, then change the order so that it is more clear.

(1) If you put information from one verse before information from an earlier verse, then combine the verses and put a hyphen between the two verse numbers.

See how to mark verses in translationStudio.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If information from one verse is put before information from an earlier verse, then combine the verses and put the verse numbers before the first verse with a hyphen between them.

> 2 You must select three cities for yourself in the middle of your land that Yahweh your God is giving you to possess. 3 You must build a road and divide the borders of your land into three parts, the land that Yahweh your God is causing you to inherit, so that everyone who kills another person may flee there. (Deuteronomy 19:2-3 ULT)
>
> 2-3 You must divide into three parts the land that he is giving to you. Then select a city in each part. You must make good roads in order that people can get to those cities easily. Someone who kills another person can escape to one of those cities to be safe. (Deuteronomy 19:2-3 UST)

1 John References:

1 John 1 Introduction 1 John 2:5-6 1 John 2:16 1 John 3:19 1 John 5:4

Poetry

Description

Poetry is one of the ways that people use the words and sounds of their language to make their speech and writing more beautiful and to express strong emotion. Through poetry, people can communicate deeper emotion than they can through simple non-poetic forms. Poetry gives more weight and elegance to statements of truth, such as proverbs, and is also easier to remember than ordinary speech.

In poetry we commonly find:

- many figures of speech such as Apostrophe
- arrangements of clauses into particular patterns such as:
  - parallel lines (See Parallelism)
  - acrostics (beginning lines with successive letters of the alphabet)
  - chiasms (in which the first line relates to the last line, the second to the next-to-last line, etc.):

> You should not give what is holy to the dogs,
>
> > and should not throw your pearls in front of the pigs.
> >
> > Otherwise they will trample them under their feet,
>
> and having turned, they might tear you to pieces. (Matt 7:6 ULT)

- repetition of some or all of a line:

> Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts. Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars. (Psalm 148:2-3 ULT)

- lines of similar length:

> Listen to my call to you,
>
> Yahweh; think about my groanings.
>
> Listen to the sound of my call, my King and my God,
>
> for it is to you that I pray. (Psalm 5:1-2 ULT)

- the same sound used at the end or at the beginning of two or more lines:

> "Twinkle, twinkle little **star**. How I wonder what you **are**." (from an English rhyme)

- the same sound repeated many times:

> "Peter, Peter, pumpkin eater" (from an English rhyme)

- The same root word used as both a verb and as a noun:

> Your old men will **dream dreams** (Joel 2:28 ULT)

> Yahweh,…**light lightning** and scatter them (Psalm 144:5-6 ULT)

We also find:

- old words and expressions
- dramatic imagery
- different use of grammar — including:
  - incomplete sentences
  - lack of connective words

Some places to look for poetry in your language

1. Songs, particularly old songs or songs used in children's games
2. Religious ceremony or chants of priests or witch doctors
3. Prayers, blessings, and curses
4. Old legends

Elegant or fancy speech

Elegant or fancy speech is similar to poetry in that it uses beautiful language, but it does not use all of the language's features of poetry, and it does not use them as much as poetry does. Popular speakers in the language often use elegant speech, and this is probably the easiest source of text to study to find out what makes speech elegant in your language.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue:

- Different languages use poetry for different things. If a poetic form would not communicate the same meaning in your language, you may need to write it without the poetry.
- Different languages use different poetic devices. A poetic device that conveys elegance or emotion in a biblical language may be confusing or misunderstood in another language.
- In some languages, using poetry for a particular part of the Bible would make it much more powerful.

Examples From the Bible

The Bible uses poetry for songs, teaching, and prophecy. Almost all of the books of the Old Testament have poetry in them and many of the books are completely made up of poetry.

> … for you saw my affliction; you knew the distress of my soul. (Psalm 31:7b ULT)

This example of Parallelism has two lines that mean the same thing.

> Yahweh, judge the nations; vindicate me, Yahweh, because I am righteous and innocent, Most High. (Psalm 7:8 ULT)

This example of parallelism shows the contrast between what David wants God to do to him and what he wants God to do to the unrighteous nations. (See Parallelism.)

> Keep your servant also from arrogant sins; let them not rule over me. (Psalm 19:13a ULT)

This example of personification speaks of sins as if they could rule over a person. (See Personification.)

> Oh, give thanks to Yahweh; for he is good,
>
> for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.
>
> Oh, give thanks to the God of gods,
>
> for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.
>
> Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords,
>
> for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.

(Psalm 136:1-3 ULT)

This example repeats the phrases “give thanks” and “his covenant faithfulness endures forever.”

Translation Strategies

If the style of poetry that is used in the source text would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other ways of translating it.

(1) Translate the poetry using one of your styles of poetry.
(2) Translate the poetry using your style of elegant speech.
(3) Translate the poetry using your style of ordinary speech.

If you use poetry it may be more beautiful.

If you use ordinary speech it may be more clear.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

> Blessed is the man who does not walk in the advice of the wicked, or stand in the pathway with sinners, or sit in the assembly of mockers. But his delight is in the law of Yahweh, and on his law he meditates day and night. (Psalm 1:1-2 ULT)

The following are examples of how people might translate Psalm 1:1-2.

(1) Translate the poetry using one of your styles of poetry. (The style in this example has words that sound similar at the end of each line.)

> “Happy is the person not encouraged **to sin**, Disrespect for God he will not **begin**, To those who laugh at God he is **no kin.** God is his constant **delight**, He loves what God says **is right**, He thinks of it all day **and night**.”

(2) Translate the poetry using your style of elegant speech.

> This is the kind of person who is truly blessed: the one who does not follow the advice of wicked people nor stop along the road to speak with sinners nor join the gathering of those who mock God. Rather, he takes great joy in Yahweh’s law, and he meditates on it day and night.

(3) Translate the poetry using your style of ordinary speech.

> The people who do not listen to the advice of bad people are really happy. They do not spend time with people who continually do evil things or join with those who do not respect God. Instead, they love to obey Yahweh’s law, and they think about it all the time.

1 John References:

1 John 2:25 1 John 5:4 1 John 5:10 1 John 5:16

Pronouns — When to Use Them

Description

When we talk or write, we use pronouns to refer to people or things without always having to repeat the noun or name. Usually, the first time we refer to someone in a story, we use a descriptive phrase or a name. The next time we might refer to that person with a simple noun or by name. After that we might refer to him simply with a pronoun as long as we think that our listeners will be able to understand easily to whom the pronoun refers.

> 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.

1 John References:

1 John 1:1 1 John 1:1 1 John 1:2 1 John 1:4 1 John 1:5 1 John 1:5 1 John 1:6 1 John 1:7 1 John 1:9 1 John 1:10 1 John 2:2 1 John 2:3 1 John 2:3 1 John 2:4 1 John 2:5 1 John 2:6 1 John 2:6 1 John 2:8 1 John 2:12 1 John 2:25 1 John 2:27 1 John 2:27 1 John 2:28 1 John 2:29 1 John 3:1 1 John 3:2 1 John 3:3 1 John 3:3 1 John 3:5 1 John 3:6 1 John 3:7 1 John 3:9 1 John 3:16 1 John 3:19 1 John 3:23 1 John 3:23 1 John 3:24 1 John 4:3 1 John 4:3 1 John 4:4 1 John 4:5 1 John 4:6 1 John 4:9 1 John 4:13 1 John 4:17 1 John 4:17 1 John 4:19 1 John 4:21 1 John 5:9 1 John 5:13 1 John 5:14 1 John 5:14 1 John 5:15 1 John 5:16 1 John 5:20

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.

> 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.

1 John References:

1 John 5:1

Appendix: Translation Words

anoint, anointed, anointing

Definition:

The term “anoint” means to rub or pour oil on a person or object. In biblical times, there were several reasons for anointing someone with oil. Often this was a Symbolic Action, representing God empowering that person with the Holy Spirit for special service to him.

- In the Old Testament, priests, kings, and prophets were anointed with oil to set them apart for special service to God.
- Objects such as altars or the tabernacle were also anointed with oil to show that they were to be used to worship and glorify God.
- In the New Testament, sick people were anointed with oil for their healing.
- Sometimes the oil was mixed with spices, giving it a sweet, perfumed smell.
- The New Testament records two times that Jesus was anointed with perfumed oil by a woman, as an act of worship.
- People prepared dead bodies for burial by anointing them with perfumed oils and spices.
- In the New Testament, receiving the Holy Spirit is described as anointing.
- The titles “Messiah” (Hebrew) and “Christ” (Greek) mean “the Anointed (One).”
- Jesus the Messiah is the one who was chosen and anointed as a Prophet, High Priest, and King.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “anoint” could be translated as “pour/put oil on” or “consecrate by pouring oil on” or “consecrate” or “appoint.”
- Depending on the context, to “be anointed” could be translated as “be consecrated with oil” or “be appointed” or “be consecrated” or “be given the Holy Spirit.”
- A phrase like “the anointed priest,” could be translated as “the priest who was consecrated with oil” or “the priest who was set apart by the pouring on of oil.”

(See also: Christ, consecrate, high priest, King of the Jews, priest, prophet)

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:20
- 1 John 2:27
- 2 Corinthians 1:21
- 1 Samuel 16:2-3
- Acts 4:27-28
- Amos 6:5-6
- Exodus 29:5-7
- James 5:13-15

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0047, H0430, H1101, H1878, H3323, H4397, H4398, H4473, H4886, H4888, H4899, H5480, H8136, G00320, G02180, G07430, G14720, G20250, G34620, G55450, G55480

1 John References:

1 John 2:20 1 John 2:27 1 John 2:27

antichrist

Definition:

The term “antichrist” refers to a person or teaching that is against Jesus Christ and his work. There are many antichrists in the world.

- The apostle John tells us that a person is the antichrist if he deceives people by saying that Jesus is not the Messiah or if he denies that Jesus is both God and human.
- The Bible also teaches that there is a general spirit of antichrist in the world that opposes Jesus’ work.
- The beast in chapter 13 of the New Testament book of Revelation is often identified as the ultimate antichrist. This person or being will attempt to destroy God’s people, but he will be defeated by Jesus.
- The apostle Paul refers to this person as “the man of lawlessness” (2 Thess 2:3) and to the general spirit of antichrist in the world as “the secret power of lawlessness” (2 Thess 2:7).

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate this term could include a word or phrase that means “Christ-opposer” or “enemy of Christ” or “person who is against Christ.”
- The phrase “spirit of the antichrist” could also be translated as “spirit that is against Christ” or “attitude of spreading lies about Christ” or “spirit that teaches lies about Christ.”
- Also consider how this term is translated in a Bible translation in a local or national language. (See: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: Christ, tribulation)

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:18
- 1 John 2:22
- 1 John 4:3
- 2 John 1:7

Word Data:

- Strong’s: G05000

1 John References:

1 John 2 Introduction 1 John 2:18 1 John 2:18
1 John 2:22 1 John 4:3

believe, believer, belief, unbeliever, unbelief

Definition:

The terms "believe" and "believe in" are closely related, but have slightly different meanings:

1. believe

- To believe something is to accept or trust that it is true.
- To believe someone is to acknowledge that what that person has said is true.

2. believe in

- To "believe in" someone means to "trust in" that person. It means to trust that the person is who he says he is, that he always speaks the truth, and that he will do what he has promised to do.
- When a person truly believes in something, he will act in such a way that shows that belief.
- The phrase "have faith in" usually has the same meaning as "believe in."
- To "believe in Jesus" means to believe that he is the Son of God, that he is God himself who also became human and who died as a sacrifice to pay for our sins. It means to trust him as Savior and live in a way that honors him.

3. believer

In the Bible, the term "believer" refers to someone who believes in and relies on Jesus Christ as Savior.

- The term "believer" literally means "person who believes."
- The term "Christian" eventually came to be the main title for believers because it indicates that they believe in Christ and obey his teachings.

4. unbelief

The term "unbelief" refers to not believing something or someone.

- In the Bible, "unbelief" refers to not believing in or not trusting in Jesus as one's Savior.
- A person who does not believe in Jesus is called an "unbeliever."

Translation Suggestions:

- To "believe" could be translated as to "know to be true" or "know to be right."
- To "believe in" could be translated as "trust completely" or "trust and obey" or "completely rely on and follow."
- Some translations may prefer to say "believer in Jesus" or "believer in Christ."
- This term could also be translated by a word or phrase that means "person who trusts in Jesus" or "someone who knows Jesus and lives for him."
- Other ways to translate "believer" could be "follower of Jesus" or "person who knows and obeys Jesus."
- The term "believer" is a general term for any believer in Christ, while "disciple" and "apostle" were used more specifically for people who knew Jesus while he was alive. It is best to translate these terms in different ways, in order to keep them distinct.
- Other ways to translate "unbelief" could include "lack of faith" or "not believing."
- The term "unbeliever" could be translated as "person who does not believe in Jesus" or "someone who does not trust in Jesus as Savior."

(See also: believe, apostle, Christian, disciple, faith, trust)

Bible References:

- Genesis 15:6
- Genesis 45:26

- Job 9:16-18
- Habakkuk 1:5-7
- Mark 6:4-6
- Mark 1:14-15
- Luke 9:41
- John 1:12
- Acts 6:5
- Acts 9:42
- Acts 28:23-24
- Romans 3:3
- 1 Corinthians 6:1
- 1 Corinthians 9:5
- 2 Corinthians 6:15
- Hebrews 3:12
- 1 John 3:23

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:4** Noah warned the people about the coming flood and told them to turn to God, but they did not **believe** him.
- **4:8** Abram **believed** God's promise. God declared that Abram was righteous because he **believed** God's promise.
- **11:2** God provided a way to save the firstborn of anyone who **believed in** him.
- **11:6** But the Egyptians did not **believe** God or obey his commands.
- **37:5** Jesus replied, "I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever **believes in** me will live, even though he dies. Everyone who **believes in** me will never die. Do you **believe** this?"
- **43:1** After Jesus returned to heaven, the disciples stayed in Jerusalem as Jesus had commanded them to do. The **believers** there constantly gathered together to pray.
- **43:3** While the **believers** were all together, suddenly the house where they were was filled with a sound like a strong wind. Then something that looked like flames of fire appeared over the heads of all the **believers**.
- **43:13** Every day, more people became **believers**.
- **46:6** That day many people in Jerusalem started persecuting the followers of Jesus, so the **believers** fled to other places. But in spite of this, they preached about Jesus everywhere they went.
- **46:1** Saul was the young man who guarded the robes of the men who killed Stephen. He did not believe in Jesus, so he persecuted the **believers**.
- **46:9** Some **believers** who fled from the persecution in Jerusalem went far away to the city of Antioch and preached about Jesus.
- **46:9** It was at Antioch that **believers** in Jesus were first called "Christians."
- **47:14** They also wrote many letters to encourage and teach the **believers** in the churches.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0539, H0540, G05430, G05440, G05690, G05700, G05710, G39820, G41000, G41020, G41030, G41350

1 John References:

1 John 3 Introduction 1 John 3:23 1 John 4:1 1 John 4:16 1 John 5:1 1 John 5:5 1 John 5:10 1 John 5:10 1 John 5:10 1 John 5:13

beloved

Definition:

The term “beloved” is an expression of affection that describes someone who is loved and dear to someone else.

- The term “beloved” literally means “loved (one)” or “(who is) loved.”
- God refers to Jesus as his “beloved Son.”
- In their letters to Christian churches, the apostles frequently address their fellow believers as “beloved.”

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated as “loved” or “loved one” or “well-loved,” or “very dear.”
- In the context of talking about a close friend, this could be translated as “my dear friend” or “my close friend.” In English it is natural to say “my dear friend, Paul” or “Paul, who is my dear friend.” Other languages may find it more natural to order this in a different way.
- Note that the word “beloved” comes from the word for God’s love, which is unconditional, unselfish, and sacrificial.

(See also: love)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 4:14
- 1 John 3:2
- 1 John 4:7
- Mark 1:11
- Mark 12:6
- Revelation 20:9
- Romans 16:8
- Song of Songs 1:14

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0157, H1730, H2532, H3033, H3039, H4261, G00250, G00270, G52070

1 John References:

1 John 2:7 1 John 3:2 1 John 3:21 1 John 4:1 1 John 4:7 1 John 4:11

born again, born of God, new birth

Definition:

The term “born again” was first used by Jesus to describe what it means for God to change a person from being dead spiritually to being alive spiritually. The terms “born of God” and “born of the Spirit” also refer to a person being given new spiritual life.

- All humans are born spiritually dead and are given a “new birth” when they accept Jesus Christ as their Savior.
- At the moment of the spiritual new birth, God’s Holy Spirit begins to live in the new believer and empowers him to produce good spiritual fruit in his life.
- It is God’s work to cause a person to be born again and become his child.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “born again” could include “born anew” or “born spiritually.”
- It is best to translate this term literally and use the normal word in the language that would be used for being born.
- The term “new birth” might be translated as “spiritual birth.”
- The phrase “born of God” could be translated as “caused by God to have new life like a newborn baby” or “given new life by God.”
- In the same way, “born of the Spirit” could be translated as “given new life by the Holy Spirit” or “empowered by the Holy Spirit to become God’s child” or “caused by the Spirit to have new life like a newborn baby.”

(See also: Holy Spirit, save)

Bible References:

- 1 John 3:9
- 1 Peter 1:3
- 1 Peter 1:23
- John 3:4
- John 3:7
- Titus 3:5

Word Data:

- Strong's: G03130, G05090, G10800, G38240

1 John References:

1 John 2:29 1 John 3:9 1 John 3:9 1 John 4:7 1 John 5:1 1 John 5:1 1 John 5:1 1 John 5:4 1 John 5:18 1 John 5:18

call, called, call out, called out

Definition:

The terms "call" and "call out," in this sense, mean to speak loudly.

- To "call out" to someone means to shout, to announce, or to proclaim. It can also mean to ask someone for help, especially God.
- In some contexts the terms "call" and "call out" mean to loudly ask for help.

Translation Suggestions:

- The expression "call out to you" could be translated as "ask you for help" or "pray to you urgently."
- To "call out" could be translated as "say loudly" or "shout" or "say with a loud voice." Make sure the translation of this does not sound like the person is angry.

(See also: pray, cry, call to summon, call name)

Bible References:

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0559, H2199, H4744, H6817, H7121, H7123, H7769, H7773, G01540, G03630, G14580, G15280, G19410, G19510, G20280, G20460, G25640, G28210, G28220, G28400, G29190, G30040, G31060, G33330, G33430, G36030, G36860, G36870, G43160, G43410, G43770, G47790, G48670, G54550, G55370, G55810

1 John References:

1 John 3:1

Christ, Messiah

Definition:

The terms “Messiah” and “Christ” mean “Anointed One” and refer to Jesus, God’s Son.

- Both “Messiah” and “Christ” are used in the New Testament to refer to God’s Son, whom God the Father appointed to rule as king over his people, and to save them from sin and death.
- In the Old Testament, the prophets wrote prophecies about the Messiah hundreds of years before he came to earth.
- Often a word meaning “anointed (one)” is used in the Old Testament to refer to the Messiah who would come.
- Jesus fulfilled many of these prophecies and did many miraculous works that proves he is the Messiah; the rest of these prophecies will be fulfilled when he returns.
- The word “Christ” is often used as a title, as in “the Christ” and “Christ Jesus.”
- “Christ” also came to be used as part of his name, as in “Jesus Christ.”

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated using its meaning, “the Anointed One” or “God’s Anointed Savior.”
- Many languages use a transliterated word that looks or sounds like “Christ” or “Messiah.” (See: How to Translate Unknowns)
- The transliterated word could be followed by the definition of the term as in, “Christ, the Anointed One.”
- Be consistent in how this is translated throughout the Bible so that it is clear that the same term is being referred to.
- Make sure the translations of “Messiah” and “Christ” work well in contexts where both terms occur in the same verse (such as John 1:41).

(See also: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Son of God, David, Jesus, anoint)

Bible References:

- 1 John 5:1-3
- Acts 2:35
- Acts 5:40-42
- John 1:40-42
- John 3:27-28
- John 4:25
- Luke 2:10-12
- Matthew 1:16

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:7** The **Messiah** was God’s Chosen One who would save the people of the world from sin.
- **17:8** As it happened, the Israelites would have to wait a long time before the **Messiah** came, almost 1,000 years.
- **21:1** From the very beginning, God planned to send the **Messiah**.
- **21:4** God promised King David that the **Messiah** would be one of David’s own descendants.
- **21:5** The **Messiah** would start the New Covenant.
- **21:6** God’s prophets also said that the **Messiah** would be a prophet, a priest, and a king.
- **21:9** The prophet Isaiah prophesied that the **Messiah** would be born from a virgin.
- **43:7** “But God raised him to life again to fulfill the prophecy which says, ‘You will not let your **Holy One** rot in the grave.’”
- **43:9** “But know for certain that God has caused Jesus to become both Lord and **Messiah**!”
- **43:11** Peter answered them, “Every one of you should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus **Christ** so that God will forgive your sins.”
- **46:6** Saul reasoned with the Jews, proving that Jesus was the **Messiah**.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4899, G33230, G55470

1 John References:

1 John 1:3 1 John 2:1 1 John 2:22 1 John 3:23 1 John 4:2 1 John 5:1 1 John 5:6 1 John 5:20

condemn, condemned, condemnation

Definition:

The terms “condemn” and “condemnation” refer to judging someone for doing something wrong.

- Often the word “condemn” includes punishing that person for what they did wrong.
- Sometimes “condemn” means to falsely accuse someone or to judge someone harshly.
- The term “condemnation” refers to the act of condemning or accusing someone.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, this term could be translated as “harshly judge” or “criticize falsely.”
- The phrase “condemn him” could be translated as “judge that he is guilty” or “state that he must be punished for his sin.”
- The term “condemnation” could be translated as “harsh judging” or “declaring to be guilty” or “punishment of guilt.”

(See also: judge, punish)

Bible References:

- 1 John 3:20
- Job 9:29
- John 5:24
- Luke 6:37
- Matthew 12:7
- Proverbs 17:15-16
- Psalms 34:22
- Romans 5:16

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6064, H7034, H7561, H8199, G01760, G08430, G26070, G26130, G26310, G26320, G26330, G29170, G29190, G29200, G52720, G60480

1 John References:

1 John 3:20 1 John 3:21

confess, confession

Definition:

To confess means to admit or assert that something is true. A “confession” is a statement or admission that something is true.

- The term “confess” can refer to boldly stating the truth about God. It can also refer to admitting that we have sinned.
- The Bible says that if people confess their sins to God, he will forgive them.
- James the apostle wrote in his letter that when believers confess their sins to each other, this brings spiritual healing.
- The apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians that someday everyone will confess or declare that Jesus is Lord.
- Paul also said that if people confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from the dead, they will be saved.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “confess” could include, “admit” or “testify” or “declare” or “acknowledge” or “affirm.”
- Different ways to translate “confession” could be, “declaration” or “testimony” or “statement about what we believe” or “admitting sin.”

(See also: faith, testimony)

Bible References:

- 1 John 1:8-10
- 2 John 1:7-8
- James 5:16
- Leviticus 5:5-6
- Matthew 3:4-6
- Nehemiah 1:6-7
- Philippians 2:9-11
- Psalms 38:17-18

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3034, H8426, G18430, G36700, G36710

1 John References:

1 John 1:9 1 John 2:23 1 John 4:2 1 John 4:3 1 John 4:15

eternity, everlasting, eternal, forever

Definition:

The terms “everlasting” and “eternal” have very similar meanings and refer to something that will always exist or that lasts forever.

- The term “eternity” refers to a state of being that has no beginning or end. It can also refer to life that never ends.
- After this present life on earth, humans will spend eternity either in heaven with God or in hell apart from God.
- The terms “eternal life” and “everlasting life” are used in the New Testament to refer to living forever with God in heaven.

The term “forever” refers to never-ending time.

- The phrase “forever and ever” has the idea of time that never ends and expresses what eternity or eternal life is like. It emphasizes that something will always happen or exist. It refers to time that never ends.
- God said that David’s throne would last “forever.” This is referred to the fact that David’s descendant Jesus will reign as king forever.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “eternal” or “everlasting” could include “unending” or “never stopping” or “always continuing.”

- The terms “eternal life” and “everlasting life” could also be translated as “life that never ends” or “life that continues without stopping” or “the raising up of our bodies to live forever.”

- Depending on the context, different ways to translate “eternity” could include “existing outside of time” or “unending life” or “life in heaven.”

- Also consider how this word is translated in a Bible translation in a local or national language. (See: How to Translate Unknowns)

- “Forever” could also be translated by “always” or “never ending.”

- The phrase “will last forever” could also be translated as “always exist” or “will never stop” or “will always continue.”

- The emphatic phrase “forever and ever” could also be translated as “for always and always” or “not ever ending” or “which never, ever ends.”

- David’s throne lasting forever could be translated as “David’s descendant will reign forever” or “a descendant of David will always be reigning.”

(See also: David, reign, life)

Bible References:

- Genesis 17:8
- Genesis 48:4
- Exodus 15:17
- 2 Samuel 3:28-30
- 1 Kings 2:32-33
- Job 4:20-21
- Psalms 21:4
- Isaiah 9:6-7
- Isaiah 40:27-28
- Daniel 7:18
- Luke 18:18
- Acts 13:46
- Romans 5:21
- Hebrews 6:19-20
- Hebrews 10:11-14
- 1 John 1:2
- 1 John 5:12
- Revelation 1:4-6
- Revelation 22:3-5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **27:1** One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit **eternal life**?”
- **28:1** One day, a rich young ruler came up to Jesus and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to have **eternal life**?” Jesus said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only One who is good, and that is God. But if you want to have **eternal life**, obey God’s laws.”

- **28:10** Jesus answered, “Everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children, or property for my name’s sake, will receive 100 times more and will also receive **eternal life**.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3117, H4481, H5331, H5703, H5705, H5769, H5865, H5957, H6924, G01260, G01650, G01660, G13360

1 John References:

1 John 1:2 1 John 2:25 1 John 3 Introduction 1 John 3:15 1 John 5:11 1 John 5:13 1 John 5:20

evil, wicked, wickedness, unpleasant

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “evil” can refer either to the concept of moral wickedness or emotional unpleasantness. The context will usually make it clear which meaning is intended in the specific instance of the term.

- While “evil” may describe a person’s character, “wicked” may refer more to a person’s behavior. However, both terms are very similar in meaning.
- The term “wickedness” refers to the state of being that exists when people do wicked things.
- The results of evil are clearly shown in how people mistreat others by killing, stealing, slandering and being cruel and unkind.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the terms “evil” and “wicked” can be translated as “bad” or “sinful” or “immoral.”
- Other ways to translate these could include “not good” or “not righteous” or “not moral.”
- Make sure the words or phrases that are used to translate these terms fit the context that is natural in the target language.

(See also: disobey, sin, good, righteous, demon)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 24:11
- 1 Timothy 6:10
- 3 John 1:10
- Genesis 2:17
- Genesis 6:5-6
- Job 1:1
- Job 8:20
- Judges 9:57
- Luke 6:22-23
- Matthew 7:11-12
- Proverbs 3:7
- Psalms 22:16-17

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **2:4** "God just knows that as soon as you eat it, you will be like God and will understand good and **evil** like he does."
- **3:1** After a long time, many people were living in the world. They had become very **wicked** and violent.
- **3:2** But Noah found favor with God. He was a righteous man living among **wicked** people.
- **4:2** God saw that if they all kept working together to do **evil**, they could do many more sinful things.
- **8:12** "You tried to do **evil** when you sold me as a slave, but God used the **evil** for good!"
- **14:2** They (Canaanites) worshiped false gods and did many **evil** things.
- **17:1** But then he (Saul) became a **wicked** man who did not obey God, so God chose a different man who would one day be king in his place.
- **18:11** In the new kingdom of Israel, all the kings were **evil**.
- **29:8** The king was so angry that he threw the **wicked** servant into prison until he could pay back all of his debt.
- **45:2** They said, "We heard him (Stephen) speak **evil** things about Moses and God!"
- **50:17** He (Jesus) will wipe away every tear and there will be no more suffering, sadness, crying, **evil**, pain, or death.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H0605, H1100, H1681, H1942, H2154, H2162, H2254, H2617, H3399, H3415, H4209, H4849, H5753, H5766, H5767, H5999, H6001, H6090, H7451, H7455, H7489, H7561, H7562, H7563, H7564, G00920, G01130, G04590, G09320, G09870, G09880, G14260, G25490, G25510, G25540, G25550, G25560, G25570, G25590, G25600, G26350, G26360, G41510, G41890, G41900, G41910, G53370

1 John References:

1 John Introduction 1 John 2 Introduction 1 John 3:12

faith

Definition:

In general, the term "faith" refers to a belief, trust or confidence in someone or something.

- To "have faith" in someone is to believe that what he says and does is true and trustworthy.
- To "have faith in Jesus" means to believe all of God's teachings about Jesus. It especially means that people trust in Jesus and his sacrifice to cleanse them from their sin and to rescue them from the punishment they deserve because of their sin.
- True faith or belief in Jesus will cause a person to produce good spiritual fruits or behaviors because the Holy Spirit is living in him.
- Sometimes "faith" refers generally to all the teachings about Jesus, as in the expression "the truths of the faith."
- In contexts such as "keep the faith" or "abandon the faith," the term "faith" refers to the state or condition of believing all the teachings about Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- In some contexts, "faith" can be translated as "belief" or "conviction" or "confidence" or "trust."
- For some languages these terms will be translated using forms of the verb "believe." (See: abstractnouns)
- The expression "keep the faith" could be translated by "keep believing in Jesus" or "continue to believe in Jesus."
- The sentence "they must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith" could be translated by "they must keep believing all the true things about Jesus that they have been taught."
- The expression "my true son in the faith" could be translated by something like "who is like a son to me because I taught him to believe in Jesus" or "my true spiritual son, who believes in Jesus."

(See also: believe, faithful)

Bible References:

- 2 Timothy 4:7
- Acts 6:7
- Galatians 2:20-21
- James 2:20

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **5:6** When Isaac was a young man, God tested Abraham's **faith** by saying, "Take Isaac, your only son, and kill him as a sacrifice to me."
- **31:7** Then he (Jesus) said to Peter, "You man of little **faith**, why did you doubt?"
- **32:16** Jesus said to her, "Your **faith** has healed you. Go in peace."
- **38:9** Then Jesus said to Peter, "Satan wants to have all of you, but I have prayed for you, Peter, that your **faith** will not fail."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0529, H0530, G16800, G36400, G41020, G60660

1 John References:

1 John Introduction 1 John 5:4

faithful, faithfulness, trustworthy

Definition:

To be "faithful" to God means to consistently live according to God's teachings. It means to be loyal to him by obeying him. The state or condition of being faithful is "faithfulness."

- A person who is faithful can be trusted to always keep his promises and to always fulfill his responsibilities to other people.
- A faithful person perseveres in doing a task, even when it is long and difficult.
- Faithfulness to God is the consistent practice of doing what God wants us to do.

Translation Suggestions:

- In many contexts, "faithful" can be translated as "loyal" or "dedicated" or "dependable."
- In other contexts, "faithful" can be translated by a word or phrase that means "continuing to believe" or "persevering in believing and obeying God."
- Ways that "faithfulness" could be translated could include "persevering in believing" or "loyalty" or "trustworthiness" or "believing and obeying God."

(See also: believe, faith, believe)

Bible References:

- Genesis 24:49
- Leviticus 26:40
- Numbers 12:7
- Joshua 2:14
- Judges 2:16-17
- 1 Samuel 2:9
- Psalm 12:1
- Proverbs 11:12-13
- Isaiah 1:26
- Jeremiah 9:7-9
- Hosea 5:7
- Luke 12:46
- Luke 16:10
- Colossians 1:7
- 1 Thessalonians 5:24
- 3 John 1:5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **8:5** Even in prison, Joseph remained **faithful** to God, and God blessed him.
- **14:12** Even so, God was still **faithful** to His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- **15:13** The people promised to remain **faithful** to God and follow his laws.
- **17:9** David ruled with justice and **faithfulness** for many years, and God blessed him. However, toward the end of his life he sinned terribly against God.
- **35:12** "The older son said to his father, 'All these years I have worked **faithfully** for you!'"
- **49:17** But God is **faithful** and says that if you confess your sins, he will forgive you.
- **50:4** "If you remain **faithful** to me to the end, then God will save you."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0529, H0530, H0539, H0540, H0571, H0898, H2181, H4603, H4604, H4820, G05690, G05710, G41030

1 John References:

1 John 1:9

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

1 John References:

1 John 5:21

fear, afraid, frighten

Definition:

The terms “fear” often refers to the unpleasant emotion a person feels when experiencing a potential threat to their safety or well-being. In the Bible, however, the term “fear” can also mean an attitude of worship, respect, awe, or obedience toward another person, usually someone powerful such as God or a king.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “fear” can be translated in various ways. Some possibilities include: “be afraid;” “deeply respect,” or “deep respect;” “revere,” or “reverence;” or perhaps “be in awe of.”
- The sentence “The fear of God fell on all of them” might be translated in various ways. Some possibilities include: “Suddenly they all felt a deep awe and respect for God;” or “Immediately, they all felt very amazed and revered God deeply;” or “Right then, they all felt very afraid of God (because of his great power).”
- The phrase “fear Yahweh” could be translated as “reverence Yahweh” or “deeply respect Yahweh.”
- The phrase “fear not” could also be translated as “do not be afraid” or “stop being afraid.”

(See also: awe, Yahweh, Lord, marvel, power)

Bible References:

- 1 John 4:18
- Acts 2:43
- Acts 19:15-17
- Genesis 50:21
- Isaiah 11:3-5
- Job 6:14
- Jonah 1:9
- Luke 12:5
- Matthew 10:28
- Proverbs 10:24-25

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0367, H0926, H1204, H1481, H1672, H1674, H1763, H2119, H2296, H2727, H2729, H2730, H2731, H2844, H2849, H2865, H3016, H3025, H3068, H3372, H3373, H3374, H4032, H4034, H4035, H4116, H4172, H6206, H6342, H6343, H6345, H6427, H7264, H7267, H7297, H7374, H7461, H7493, H8175, G08700, G11670, G11680, G11690, G16300, G17190, G21240, G21250, G29620, G53980, G53990, G54000, G54010

1 John References:

1 John 4:18 1 John 4:18 1 John 4:18 1 John 4:18

fellowship

Definition:

In general, the term “fellowship” refers to friendly interactions between members of a group of people who share similar interests and experiences.

- In the Bible, the term “fellowship” usually refers to the unity of believers in Christ.
- Christian fellowship is a shared relationship that believers have with one another through their relationship with Christ and the Holy Spirit.
- The early Christians expressed their fellowship through listening to the teaching of God’s Word and praying together, through the sharing of their belongings, and through eating meals together.
- Christians also have fellowship with God through their faith in Jesus and his sacrificial death on the cross which removed the barrier between God and people.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “fellowship” could include “a sharing together” or “relationship” or “companionship” or “Christian community.”

Bible References:

- 1 John 1:3
- Acts 2:40-42
- Philippians 1:3-6
- Philippians 2:1
- Philippians 3:10
- Psalms 55:12-14

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2266, H8667, G28420, G28440, G33520, G47900

1 John References:

1 John 1:3 1 John 1:3 1 John 1:6 1 John 1:7

forgive, forgiven, forgiveness, pardon, pardoned

Definition:

To forgive someone means to not hold a grudge against that person even though they did something hurtful. “Forgiveness” is the act of forgiving someone.

- Forgiving someone often means not punishing that person for something he has done wrong.
- This term can be used figuratively to mean “cancel,” as in the expression “forgive a debt.”
- When people confess their sins, God forgives them based on Jesus’ sacrificial death on the cross.
- Jesus taught his disciples to forgive others as he has forgiven them.

The term “pardon” means to forgive and not punish someone for his sin.

- This word has the same meaning as “forgive” but may also include the meaning of a formal decision to not punish someone who is guilty.
- In a court of law, a judge can pardon a person found guilty of a crime.
- Even though we are guilty of sin, Jesus Christ pardoned us from being punished in hell, based on his sacrificial death on the cross.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “forgive” could be translated as “pardon” or “cancel” or “release” or “not hold against” (someone).
- The term “forgiveness” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “practice of not resenting” or “declaring (someone) as not guilty” or “the act of pardoning.”
- If the language has a word for a formal decision to forgive, that word could be used to translate “pardon.”

(See also: guilt)

Bible References:

- Genesis 50:17
- Numbers 14:17-19
- Deuteronomy 29:20-21
- Joshua 24:19-20
- 2 Kings 5:17-19
- Psalms 25:11
- Psalms 25:17-19
- Isaiah 55:6-7
- Isaiah 40:2
- Luke 5:21
- Acts 8:22
- Ephesians 4:31-32
- Colossians 3:12-14
- 1 John 2:12

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **7:10** But Esau had already **forgiven** Jacob, and they were happy to see each other again.
- **13:15** Then Moses climbed the mountain again and prayed that God would **forgive** the people. God listened to Moses and **forgave** them.
- **17:13** David repented of his sin and God **forgave** him.
- **21:5** In the New Covenant, God would write his law on the people's hearts, the people would know God personally, they would be his people, and God would **forgive** their sins.
- **29:1** One day Peter asked Jesus, "Master, how many times should I **forgive** my brother when he sins against me?"
- **29:8** I **forgave** your debt because you begged me.
- **38:5** Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my blood of the New Covenant that is poured out for the **forgiveness** of sins."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5546, H5547, H3722, H5375, H5545, H5547, H7521, G85900, G86300, G54830

1 John References:

1 John Introduction 1 John 1:9 1 John 2:12

God

Definition:

In the Bible, the term "God" refers to the eternal being who created the universe out of nothing. God exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God's personal name is "Yahweh."

- God has always existed; he existed before anything else existed, and he will continue to exist forever.
- He is the only true God and has authority over everything in the universe.
- God is perfectly righteous, infinitely wise, holy, sinless, just, merciful, and loving.
- He is a covenant-keeping God, who always fulfills his promises.
- People were created to worship God and he is the only one they should worship.
- God revealed his name as "Yahweh," which means "he is" or "I am" or "the One who (always) exists."
- The Bible also teaches about false "gods," which are nonliving idols that people wrongly worship.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate "God" could include "Deity" or "Creator" or "Supreme Being" or "Supreme Creator" or "Infinite Sovereign Lord" or "Eternal Supreme Being."
- Consider how God is referred to in a local or national language. There may also already be a word for "God" in the language being translated. If so, it is important to make sure that this word fits the characteristics of the one true God as described above.
- Many languages capitalize the first letter of the word for the one true God, to distinguish it from the word for a false god. Another way to make this distinction would be to use different terms for "God" and "god." NOTE: In the biblical text, when a person who does not worship Yahweh speaks about Yahweh and uses the word "god," it is acceptable to render the term without a capital letter in reference to Yahweh (see Jonah 1:6, 3:9).

- The phrase "I will be their God and they will be my people" could also be translated as "I, God, will rule over these people and they will worship me."

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: create, false god, God the Father, Holy Spirit, false god, Son of God, Yahweh)

Bible References:

- 1 John 1:7
- 1 Samuel 10:7-8
- 1 Timothy 4:10
- Colossians 1:16
- Deuteronomy 29:14-16
- Ezra 3:1-2
- Genesis 1:2
- Hosea 4:11-12
- Isaiah 36:6-7
- James 2:20
- Jeremiah 5:5
- John 1:3
- Joshua 3:9-11
- Lamentations 3:43
- Micah 4:5
- Philippians 2:6
- Proverbs 24:12
- Psalms 47:9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:1** **God** created the universe and everything in it in six days.
- **1:15** **God** made man and woman in his own image.
- **5:3** "I am **God** Almighty. I will make a covenant with you."
- **9:14** **God** said, "I AM WHO I AM. Tell them, 'I AM has sent me to you.' Also tell them, 'I am Yahweh, the **God** of your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is my name forever.'"
- **10:2** Through these plagues, **God** showed Pharaoh that he is more powerful than Pharaoh and all of Egypt's gods.
- **16:1** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of Yahweh, the true **God**.
- **22:7** "You, my son, will be called the prophet of the **Most High God** who will prepare the people to receive the Messiah!"
- **24:9** There is only one **God**. But John heard **God** the Father speak, and saw Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit when he baptized Jesus.
- **25:7** "Worship only the Lord your **God** and only serve him."
- **28:1** "There is only one who is good, and that is **God**."
- **49:9** But **God** loved everyone in the world so much that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be punished for his sins, but will live with **God** forever.
- **50:16** But some day **God** will create a new heaven and a new earth that will be perfect.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0136, H0305, H0410, H0426, H0430, H0433, H2486, H2623, H3068, H3069, H3863, H4136, H6697, G01120, G05160, G09320, G09350, G10960, G11400, G20980, G21240, G21280, G21500, G21520, G21530, G22990, G23040, G23050, G23120, G23130, G23140, G23150, G23160, G23170, G23180, G23190, G23200, G33610, G37850, G41510, G52070, G53770, G54630, G55370, G55380

1 John References:

1 John 1:5 1 John 2:5 1 John 2:17 1 John 3:1 1 John 3:2 1 John 3:9 1 John 3:9 1 John 3:10 1 John 3:10 1 John 3:17 1 John 3:20 1 John 3:21 1 John 4:1 1 John 4:2 1 John 4:2 1 John 4:3 1 John 4:4 1 John 4:6 1 John 4:6 1 John 4:6 1 John 4:7 1 John 4:7 1 John 4:7 1 John 4:8 1 John 4:8 1 John 4:9 1 John 4:9 1 John 4:10 1 John 4:11 1 John 4:12 1 John 4:12 1 John 4:15 1 John 4:15 1 John 4:16 1 John 4:16 1 John 4:16 1 John 4:16 1 John 4:20 1 John 4:20 1 John 4:21 1 John 5:1 1 John 5:2 1 John 5:2 1 John 5:3 1 John 5:4 1 John 5:9 1 John 5:9 1 John 5:10 1 John 5:10 1 John 5:11 1 John 5:18 1 John 5:18 1 John 5:19 1 John 5:20

God the Father, heavenly Father, Father

Definition:

The terms “God the Father” and “heavenly Father” refer to Yahweh, the one true God. Another term with the same meaning is “Father,” used most often when Jesus was referring to him.

- God exists as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each one is fully God, and yet they are only one God. This is a mystery that mere humans cannot fully understand.
- God the Father sent God the Son (Jesus) into the world and he sends the Holy Spirit to his people.
- Anyone who believes in God the Son becomes a child of God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit comes to live in that person. This is another mystery that human beings cannot fully understand.

Translation Suggestions:

- In translating the phrase “God the Father,” it is best to translate “Father” with the same word that the language naturally uses to refer to a human father.
- The term “heavenly Father” could be translated by “Father who lives in heaven” or “Father God who lives in heaven” or “God our Father from heaven.”
- Usually “Father” is capitalized when it, refers to God.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: ancestor, God, heaven, Holy Spirit, Jesus, Son of God)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 8:4-6
- 1 John 2:1
- 1 John 2:23
- 1 John 3:1
- Colossians 1:1-3
- Ephesians 5:18-21
- Luke 10:22
- Matthew 5:16
- Matthew 23:9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **24:9** There is only one God. But John heard **God the Father** speak, and saw Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit when he baptized Jesus.
- **29:9** Then Jesus said, “This is what my **heavenly Father** will do to every one of you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”
- **37:9** Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “**Father**, thank you for hearing me.”
- **40:7** Then Jesus cried out, “It is finished! **Father**, I give my spirit into your hands.”
- **42:10** “So go, make disciples of all people groups by baptizing them in the name of **the Father**, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and by teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”
- **43:8** “Jesus is now exalted to the right hand of **God the Father**.”
- **50:10** “Then the righteous ones will shine like the sun in the kingdom of **God their Father**.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0001, H0002, G39620

1 John References:

1 John 1:2 1 John 1:3 1 John 2:1 1 John 2:14 1 John 2:15 1 John 2:16 1 John 2:22 1 John 2:23 1 John 2:23 1 John 2:24 1 John 3:1 1 John 4:14

Holy One

Definition:

The term “Holy One” is a title in the Bible that almost always refers to God.

- In the Old Testament, this title often occurs in the phrase “Holy One of Israel.”
- In the New Testament, Jesus is also referred to as the “Holy One.”
- The term “holy one” is sometimes used in the Bible to refer to an angel.

Translation Suggestions:

- The literal term is “the Holy” (with “One” being implied.) Many languages (like English) will translate this with the implied noun included (such as “One” or “God”).
- This term could also be translated as “God, who is holy” or “the Set Apart One.”
- The phrase “the Holy One of Israel” could be translated as “the Holy God whom Israel worships” or “the Holy One who rules Israel.”
- It is best to translate this term using the same word or phrase that is used to translate “holy.”

(See also: holy, God)

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:20
- 2 Kings 19:22
- Acts 2:27
- Acts 3:13-14
- Isaiah 5:15-17
- Isaiah 41:14
- Luke 4:33-34

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2623, H0376, H6918, G00400, G37410

1 John References:

1 John 2:20

Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit

Definition:

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 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

1 John References:

1 John 3:24 1 John 4:2 1 John 4:13 1 John 5:6 1 John 5:6 1 John 5:8

hope, hoped

Definition:

Hope is strongly desiring something to happen. Hope can imply either certainty or uncertainty regarding a future event.

- In the Bible, the term "hope" also has the meaning of "trust," as in "my hope is in the Lord." It refers to a sure expectation of receiving what God has promised his people.
- Sometimes the ULT translates the term in the original language as "confidence." This happens mostly in the New Testament in situations where people who believe in Jesus as their Savior have the assurance (or confidence or hope) of receiving what God has promised.
- To have "no hope" means to have no expectation of something good happening. It means that it is actually very certain that it will not happen.

Translation Suggestions:

- In some contexts, the term to "hope" could also be translated as to "wish" or to "desire" or to "expect."
- The expression "nothing to hope for" could be translated as "nothing to trust in" or "no expectation of anything good"
- To "have no hope" could be translated as "have no expectation of anything good" or "have no security" or "be sure that nothing good will happen."
- The expression "have set your hopes on" could also be translated as "have put your confidence in" or "have been trusting in."
- The phrase "I find hope in your Word" could also be translated as "I am confident that your Word is true" or "Your Word helps me trust in you" or "When I obey your Word, I am certain to be blessed."
- Phrases such as "hope in" God could also be translated a, "trust in God" or "know for sure that God will do what he has promised" or "be certain that God is faithful."

(See also: bless, confidence, good, obey, trust, word of God)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 29:14-15
- 1 Thessalonians 2:19
- Acts 24:14-16
- Acts 26:6
- Acts 27:20
- Colossians 1:5
- Job 11:20

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0982, H0983, H0986, H2620, H2976, H3175, H3176, H3689, H4009, H4268, H4723, H7663, H7664, H8431, H8615, G00910, G05600, G16790, G16800, G20700

1 John References:

1 John 3:3

Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus

Definition:

Jesus is God's Son. The name "Jesus" means "Yahweh saves." The term "Christ" is a title that means "anointed one" and is another word for Messiah.

- The two names are often combined as "Jesus Christ" or "Christ Jesus." These names emphasize that God's Son is the Messiah, who came to save people from being punished eternally for their sins.
- In a miraculous way, the Holy Spirit caused the eternal Son of God to be born as a human being. His mother was told by an angel to call him "Jesus" because he was destined to save people from their sins.
- Jesus did many miracles that revealed that he is God and that he is the Christ, or the Messiah.

Translation Suggestions:

- In many languages "Jesus" and "Christ" are spelled in a way that keeps the sounds or spelling as close to the original as possible. For example, "Jesucristo," "Jezus Christus," "Yesus Kristus", and "Hesukristo" are some of the ways that these names are translated into different languages.
- For the term "Christ," some translators may prefer to use only some form of the term "Messiah" throughout.
- Also consider how these names are spelled in a nearby local or national language.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Christ, God, God the Father, high priest, kingdom of God, Mary, Savior, Son of God)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 6:11
- 1 John 2:2
- 1 John 4:15
- 1 Timothy 1:2

- 2 Peter 1:2
- 2 Thessalonians 2:15
- 2 Timothy 1:10
- Acts 2:23
- Acts 5:30
- Acts 10:36
- Hebrews 9:14
- Hebrews 10:22
- Luke 24:20
- Matthew 1:21
- Matthew 4:3
- Philippians 2:5
- Philippians 2:10
- Philippians 4:21-23
- Revelation 1:6

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **22:4** The angel said, "You will become pregnant and give birth to a son. You are to name him **Jesus** and he will be the Messiah."
- **23:2** "Name him **Jesus** (which means, 'Yahweh saves'), because he will save the people from their sins."
- **24:7** So John baptized him (Jesus), even though **Jesus** had never sinned.
- **24:9** There is only one God. But John heard God the Father speak, and saw **Jesus** the Son and the Holy Spirit when he baptized **Jesus**.
- **25:8** **Jesus** did not give in to Satan's temptations, so Satan left him.
- **26:8** Then **Jesus** went throughout the region of Galilee, and large crowds came to him. They brought many people who were sick or handicapped, including those who could not see, walk, hear, or speak, and **Jesus** healed them.
- **31:3** Then **Jesus** finished praying and went to the disciples. He walked on top of the water across the lake toward their boat!
- **38:2** He (Judas) knew that the Jewish leaders denied that **Jesus** was the Messiah and that they were plotting to kill him.
- **40:8** Through his death, **Jesus** opened a way for people to come to God.
- **42:11** Then **Jesus** was taken up to heaven, and a cloud hid him from their sight. **Jesus** sat down at the right hand of God to rule over all things.
- **50:17** **Jesus** and his people will live on the new earth, and he will reign forever over everything that exists. He will wipe away every tear and there will be no more suffering, sadness, crying, evil, pain, or death. **Jesus** will rule his kingdom with peace and justice, and he will be with his people forever.

Word Data:

- Strong's: G24240, G55470

1 John References:

1 John 1:3 1 John 1:7 1 John 2:1 1 John 2:22 1 John 3:23 1 John 4:2 1 John 4:3 1 John 4:15 1 John 5:1 1 John 5:5 1 John 5:6 1 John 5:20

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

1 John References:

1 John 4:17

last day, last days, latter days

Definition:

The term “the last days” refers generally to the time which begins with the first coming of Jesus and ends with his second coming and the final day of judgement. The Bible also calls the final day of judgement “the last day.” The phrase “the latter days” is sometimes used in the Bible with the same meaning as the phrase “the last days” but other times it can refer only to a time that is after the time in which the speaker is speaking but before the second coming of Jesus. The term “the last day” refers to the day of final judgement.

- This time period of “the last days” will have an unknown duration.
- “The last day” is a time of judgment upon those who have turned away from God.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “the last days” can also be translated as “the final days” or “the end times.”
- The term “the last day” can also be translated as “the final day.”
- In some contexts, this could be translated as “end of the world” or “when this world ends.”

(See also: day of the Lord, judge, turn, world)

Bible References:

- 2 Peter 3:3-4
- Daniel 10:14-15
- Hebrews 1:2
- Isaiah 2:2
- James 5:3
- Jeremiah 23:19-20
- John 11:24-26
- Micah 4:1

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0319, H3117, G20780, G22500

1 John References:

1 John 2 Introduction

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:

1. The kind of love that comes from God is focused on the good of others even when it does not 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.
2. 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.
3. 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

1 John References:

1 John 2:5 1 John 2:10 1 John 2:15 1 John 2:15 1 John 2:15 1 John 3:1 1 John 3:10 1 John 3:11 1 John 3:14 1 John 3:14 1 John 3:16 1 John 3:17 1 John 3:18 1 John 3:23 1 John 4:7 1 John 4:7 1 John 4:7 1 John 4:8 1 John 4:8 1 John 4:9 1 John 4:10 1 John 4:10 1 John 4:10 1 John 4:11 1 John 4:11 1 John 4:12 1 John 4:12 1 John 4:16 1 John 4:16 1 John 4:16 1 John 4:17 1 John 4:18 1 John 4:18 1 John 4:18 1 John 4:19 1 John 4:19 1 John 4:20 1 John 4:20 1 John 4:20 1 John 4:21 1 John 4:21 1 John 5:1 1 John 5:1 1 John 5:2 1 John 5:2 1 John 5:3

pray, prayer

Definition:

The terms “pray” and “prayer” refer to talking with God. These terms are also used to refer to people trying to talk to a false god.

- People can pray silently, talking to God with their thoughts, or they can pray aloud, speaking to God with their voice. Sometimes prayers are written down, such as when David wrote his prayers in the Book of Psalms.
- Prayer can include asking God for mercy, for help with a problem, and for wisdom in making decisions.
- Often people ask God to heal people who are sick or who need his help in other ways.
- People also thank and praise God when they are praying to him.
- Praying includes confessing our sins to God and asking him to forgive us.
- Talking to God is sometimes called “communing” with him as our spirit communicates with his spirit, sharing our emotions and enjoying his presence.
- This term could be translated as “talking to God” or “communicating with God.” The translation of this term should be able to include praying that is silent.

(See also: false god, forgive, praise)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 3:9
- Acts 8:24
- Acts 14:26
- Colossians 4:4
- John 17:9
- Luke 11:1
- Matthew 5:43-45
- Matthew 14:22-24

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **6:5** Isaac **prayed** for Rebekah, and God allowed her to get pregnant with twins.
- **13:12** But Moses **prayed** for them, and God listened to his **prayer** and did not destroy them.
- **19:8** Then the prophets of Baal **prayed** to Baal, “Hear us, O Baal!”
- **21:7** Priests also **prayed** to God for the people.
- **38:11** Jesus told his disciples to **pray** that they would not enter into temptation.
- **43:13** The disciples continually listened to the teaching of the apostles, spent time together, ate together, and **prayed** with each other.
- **49:18** God tells you to **pray**, to study his word, to worship him with other Christians, and to tell others what he has done for you.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0559, H0577, H1156, H2470, H3863, H3908, H4994, H6279, H6293, H6419, H6739, H7592, H7878, H7879, H7881, H8034, H8605, G01540, G11620, G11890, G17830, G20650, G21710, G21720, G38700, G43350, G43360

1 John References:

1 John 5:16

promise, promised

Definition:

When used as a verb, the term “promise” refers to the action of a person saying that he will do something in such way that he obligates himself to fulfill what he has said. When used as a noun, the term “promise” refers to the thing that a person obligates himself to do.

- The Bible records many promises that God has made for his people.
- Promises are an important part of formal agreements such as covenants.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “promise” could be translated as “commitment” or “assurance” or “guarantee.”
- To “promise to do something” could be translated as “assure someone that you will do something” or “commit to doing something.”

(See also: covenant, oath, vow)

Bible References:

- Galatians 3:15-16
- Genesis 25:31-34
- Hebrews 11:9
- James 1:12
- Numbers 30:2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:15** God said, “I **promise** I will never again curse the ground because of the evil things people do, or destroy the world by causing a flood, even though people are sinful from the time they are children.”Â
- **3:16** God then made the first rainbow as a sign of his **promise**. Every time the rainbow appeared in the sky, God would remember what he **promised** and so would his people.
- **4:8** God spoke to Abram and **promised** again that he would have a son and as many descendants as the stars in the sky. Abram believed God’s **promise**.
- **5:4** “Your wife, Sarai, will have a son—he will be the son of **promise**.”
- **8:15** The covenant **promises** that God gave to Abraham were passed on to Isaac, then to Jacob, and then to Jacob’s twelve sons and their families.
- **17:14** Though David had been unfaithful to God, God was still faithful to his **promises**.
- **50:1** Jesus **promised** he would return at the end of the world. Though he has not yet come back, he will keep his **promise**.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0559, H0562, H1696, H8569, G18430, G18600, G18610, G18620, G36700, G42790

1 John References:

1 John 2:25 1 John 2:25

propitiation

Definition:

The term “propitiation” refers to a sacrifice that is made to satisfy or fulfill the justice of God and to appease his wrath.

- The offering of the sacrificial blood of Jesus Christ is the propitiation to God for mankind’s sins.
- Jesus’ death on the cross appeased God’s wrath against sin. This provided a way for God to look on people with favor and offer them eternal life.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated as “appeasement” or “causing God to forgive sins and grant favor to people.”
- The word “atonement” is close in meaning to “propitiation.” It is important to compare how these two terms are used.

(See also: atonement, everlasting, forgive, sacrifice)

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:2
- 1 John 4:10
- Romans 3:25-26

Word Data:

- Strong’s: G24340, G24350

1 John References:

1 John 2:2 1 John 4:10

pure, purify, purification

Definition:

To be “pure” means to have no flaw or to have nothing mixed in that is not supposed to be there. To purify something is to cleanse it and remove anything that contaminates or pollutes it.

- In regard to Old Testament laws, “purify” and “purification” refer mainly to the cleansing from things that make an object or a person ritually unclean, such as disease, body fluids, or childbirth.
- The Old Testament also had laws telling people how to be purified from sin, usually by the sacrifice of an animal. This was only temporary and the sacrifices had to be repeated over and over again.
- In the New Testament, to be purified often refers to being cleansed from sin.
- The only way that people can be completely and permanently purified from sin is through repenting and receiving God’s forgiveness, through trusting in Jesus and his sacrifice.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “purify” could be translated as “make pure” or “cleanse” or “cleanse from all contamination” or “get rid of all sin.”
- A phrase such as “when the time for their purification was over” could be translated as “when they had purified themselves by waiting the required number of days.”
- The phrase “provided purification for sins” could be translated as “provided a way for people to be completely cleansed from their sin.”
- Other ways to translate “purification” could include “cleansing” or “spiritual washing” or “becoming ritually clean.”

(See also: atonement, clean, spirit)

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 1:5
- Exodus 31:6-9
- Hebrews 9:13-15
- James 4:8

- Luke 2:22
- Revelation 14:4

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1249, H1252, H1253, H1305, H1865, H2134, H2135, H2141, H2212, H2398, H2403, H2561, H2889, H2890, H2891, H2892, H2893, H3795, H3800, H4795, H5343, H5462, H6337, H6884, H6942, H8562, G00480, G00490, G00530, G00540, G15060, G25110, G25120, G25130, G25140

1 John References:

1 John 3:3 1 John 3:3

righteous, righteousness, unrighteous, unrighteousness, upright, uprightness

Definition:

The term "righteousness" refers to God's absolute goodness, justice, faithfulness, and love. Having these qualities makes God "righteous." Because God is righteous, he must condemn sin.

- These terms are also often used to describe a person who obeys God and is morally good. However, because all people have sinned, no one except God is completely righteous.
- Examples of people the Bible who were called "righteous" include Noah, Job, Abraham, Zachariah, and Elisabeth.
- When people trust in Jesus to save them, God cleanses them from their sins and declares them to be righteous because of Jesus' righteousness.

The term "unrighteous" means to be sinful and morally corrupt. "Unrighteousness" refers to sin or the condition of being sinful.

- These terms especially refer to living in a way that disobeys God's teachings and commands.
- Unrighteous people are immoral in their thoughts and actions.
- Sometimes "the unrighteous" refers specifically to people who do not believe in Jesus.

The terms "upright" and "uprightness" refer to acting in a way that follows God's laws.

- The meaning of these words includes the idea of standing up straight and looking directly ahead.
- A person who is "upright" is someone who obeys God's rules and does not do things that are against his will.
- Terms such as "integrity" and "righteous" have similar meanings and are sometimes used in parallelism constructions, such as "integrity and uprightness." (See: parallelism)

Translation Suggestions:

- When it describes God, the term "righteous" could be translated as "perfectly good and just" or "always acting rightly."
- God's "righteousness" could also be translated as "perfect faithfulness and goodness."
- When it describes people who are obedient to God, the term "righteous" could also be translated as "morally good" or "just" or "living a God-pleasing life."
- The phrase "the righteous" could also be translated as "righteous people" or "God-fearing people."
- Depending on the context, "righteousness" could also be translated with a word or phrase that means "goodness" or "being perfect before God" or "acting in a right way by obeying God" or "doing perfectly good."
- The term "unrighteous" could simply be translated as "not righteous."
- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this could include "wicked" or "immoral" or "people who rebel against God" or "sinful."
- The phrase "the unrighteous" could be translated as "unrighteous people."
- The term "unrighteousness" could be translated as "sin" or "evil thoughts and actions" or "wickedness."
- If possible, it is best to translate this in a way that shows its relationship to "righteous, righteousness."
- Ways to translate "upright" could include "acting rightly" or "one who acts rightly" or "following God's laws" or "obedient to God" or "behaving in a way that is right."
- The term "uprightness" could be translated as "moral purity" or "good moral conduct" or "rightness."
- The phrase "the upright" could be translated as "people who are upright" or "upright people."

(See also: evil, faithful, good, holy, integrity, just, law, law, obey, pure, righteous, sin, unlawful)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 19:16
- Job 1:8
- Psalms 37:30
- Psalms 49:14
- Psalms 107:42
- Ecclesiastes 12:10-11
- Isaiah 48:1-2
- Ezekiel 33:13
- Malachi 2:6
- Matthew 6:1
- Acts 3:13-14
- Romans 1:29-31
- 1 Corinthians 6:9
- Galatians 3:7
- Colossians 3:25
- 2 Thessalonians 2:10
- 2 Timothy 3:16
- 1 Peter 3:18-20
- 1 John 1:9
- 1 John 5:16-17

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:2** But Noah found favor with God. He was a **righteous** man, living among wicked people.
- **4:8** God declared that Abram was **righteous** because he believed in God's promise.
- **17:2** David was a humble and **righteous** man who trusted and obeyed God.
- **23:1** Joseph, the man Mary was engaged to, was a **righteous** man.
- **50:10** Then the **righteous** ones will shine like the sun in the kingdom of God their Father.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H1368, H2555, H3072, H3474, H3476, H3477, H3483, H4334, H4339, H4749, H5228, H5229, H5324, H5765, H5766, H5767, H5977, H6662, H6663, H6664, H6665, H6666, H6968, H8535, H8537, H8549, H8552, G00930, G00940, G04580, G13410, G13420, G13430, G13440, G13450, G13460, G21180, G37160, G37170

1 John References:

1 John 1:9 1 John 1:9 1 John 2:1 1 John 2:29 1 John 2:29 1 John 3:7 1 John 3:7 1 John 3:7 1 John 3:10 1 John 3:12 1 John 5:17

Satan, devil, evil one

Definition:

Although the devil is a spirit being that God created, he rebelled against God and became God's enemy. The devil is also called "Satan" and "the evil one."

- The devil hates God and all that God created because he wants to take the place of God and be worshiped as God.
- Satan tempts people to rebel against God.
- God sent his Son, Jesus, to rescue people from Satan's control.
- The name "Satan" means "adversary" or "enemy."
- The word "devil" means "accuser."

Translation Suggestions:

- The word "devil" could also be translated as "the accuser" or "the evil one" or "the king of evil spirits" or "the chief evil spirit."
- "Satan" could be translated as "Opponent" or "Adversary" or some other name that shows that he is the devil.
- These terms should be translated differently from demon and evil spirit.
- Consider how these terms are translated in a local or national language.

(See: How to Translate Unknowns)

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: demon, evil, kingdom of God, tempt)

Bible References:

- 1 John 3:8
- 1 Thessalonians 2:17-20
- 1 Timothy 5:15
- Acts 13:10
- Job 1:8
- Mark 8:33
- Zechariah 3:1

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **21:1** The snake who deceived Eve was **Satan**. The promise meant that the Messiah who would come would defeat **Satan** completely.
- **25:6** Then **Satan** showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and all their glory and said, “I will give you all this if you bow down and worship me.”
- **25:8** Jesus did not give in to **Satan’s** temptations, so **Satan** left him.
- **33:6** So Jesus explained, “The seed is the word of God. The path is a person who hears God’s word, but does not understand it, and the **devil** takes the word from him.”
- **38:7** After Judas took the bread, **Satan** entered into him.
- **48:4** God promised that one of Eve’s descendants would crush **Satan’s** head, and **Satan** would wound his heel. This meant that **Satan** would kill the Messiah, but God would raise him to life again, and then the Messiah will crush the power of **Satan** forever.
- **49:15** God has taken you out of **Satan’s** kingdom of darkness and put you into God’s kingdom of light.
- **50:9** “The weeds represent the people who belong to the **evil one**. The enemy who planted the weeds represents the **devil**.”
- **50:10** “When the world ends, the angels will gather together all the people who belong to the **devil** and throw them into a raging fire, where they will cry and grind their teeth in terrible suffering.”
- **50:15** When Jesus returns, he will completely destroy **Satan** and his kingdom. He will throw **Satan** into hell where he will burn forever, along with everyone who chose to follow him rather than to obey God.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H7700, H7854, H8163, G11390, G11400, G11410, G11420, G12280, G41900, G45660, G45670

1 John References:

1 John 2:13 1 John 2:14 1 John 3:8 1 John 3:8 1 John 3:8 1 John 3:10 1 John 3:12 1 John 5 Introduction 1 John 5:18 1 John 5:19

save, saved, safe, salvation, rescue

Definition:

The term "save" refers to keeping someone from experiencing something bad or harmful. To "be safe" means to be protected from harm or danger.

- In a physical sense, people can be saved or rescued from harm, danger, or death.
- In a spiritual sense, if a person has been "saved," then God, through Jesus' death on the cross, has forgiven him and rescued him from being punished in hell for his sin.
- People can save or rescue people from danger, but only God can save people from being punished eternally for their sins.

The term "salvation" refers to being saved or rescued from evil and danger.

- In the Bible, "salvation" usually refers to the spiritual and eternal deliverance granted by God to those who repent of their sins and believe in Jesus.
- The Bible also talks about God saving or delivering his people from their physical enemies.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate "save" could include "deliver" or "keep from harm" or "take out of harm's way" or "keep from dying."

- In the expression "whoever would save his life," the term "save" could also be translated as "preserve" or "protect."

- The term "safe" could be translated as "protected from danger" or "in a place where nothing can harm."

- The term "salvation" could also be translated using words related to "save" or "rescue," as in "God's saving people (from being punished for their sins)" or "God's rescuing his people (from their enemies)."

- "God is my salvation" could be translated as "God is the one who saves me."

- "You will draw water from the wells of salvation" could be translated as "You will be refreshed as with water because God is rescuing you."

(See also: cross, deliver, punish, sin, Savior)

Bible References:

- Genesis 49:18
- Genesis 47:25-26
- Psalms 80:3
- Jeremiah 16:19-21
- Micah 6:3-5
- Luke 2:30
- Luke 8:36-37
- Acts 4:12
- Acts 28:28
- Acts 2:21
- Romans 1:16
- Romans 10:10
- Ephesians 6:17
- Philippians 1:28
- 1 Timothy 1:15-17
- Revelation 19:1-2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **9:8** Moses tried to **save** his fellow Israelite.
- **11:2** God provided a way to **save** the firstborn son of anyone who believed in him.
- **12:5** Moses told the Israelites, "Stop being afraid! God will fight for you today and **save** you."
- **12:13** The Israelites sang many songs to celebrate their new freedom and to praise God because he **saved** them from the Egyptian army.
- **16:17** This pattern repeated many times: the Israelites would sin, God would punish them, they would repent, and God would send a deliverer to **save** them.
- **44:8** "You crucified Jesus, but God raised him to life again! You rejected him, but there is no other way to be **saved** except through the power of Jesus!"

- **47:11** The jailer trembled as he came to Paul and Silas and asked, “What must I do to be **saved**?” Paul answered, “Believe in Jesus, the Master, and you and your family will be **saved**.”
- **49:12** Good works cannot **save** you.
- **49:13** God will **save** everyone who believes in Jesus and receives him as their Master. But he will not **save** anyone who does not believe in him.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0983, H2421, H2502, H3444, H3467, H3468, H4190, H4422, H4931, H5338, H6308, H6403, H7682, H7951, H7965, H8104, H8199, H8668, G08030, G08040, G08060, G12950, G15080, G49820, G49910, G49920, G51980

1 John References:

1 John 3 Introduction 1 John 4 Introduction

Savior, savior

Definition:

The term “savior” refers to a person who saves or rescues others from danger. It can also refer to someone who gives strength to others or provides for them.

- In the Old Testament, God is referred to as Israel’s Savior because he often rescued them from their enemies, gave them strength, and provided them with what they needed to live.
- In the Old Testament, God appointed judges to protect the Israelites by leading them in battle against other people groups who came to attack them. These judges are sometimes called “saviors.” The Old Testament book of Judges records the time in history when these judges were governing Israel.
- In the New Testament, “Savior” is used as a description or title for Jesus Christ because he saves people from being eternally punished for their sin. He also saves them from being controlled by their sin.

Translation Suggestions:

- If possible, “Savior” should be translated with a word that is related to the words “save” and “salvation.”
- Ways to translate this term could include “the One who saves” or “God, who saves” or “who delivers from danger” or “who rescues from enemies” or “Jesus, the one who rescues (people) from sin.”

(See also: deliver, Jesus, save, save)

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 4:10
- 2 Peter 2:20
- Acts 5:29-32
- Isaiah 60:15-16
- Luke 1:47
- Psalms 106:19-21

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3467, G49900

1 John References:

1 John 4:14

sin, sinful, sinner, sinning

Definition:

The term “sin” refers to actions, thoughts, and words that are against God’s will and laws. Sin can also refer to not doing something that God wants us to do.

- Sin includes anything we do that does not obey or please God, even things that other people do not know about.
- Thoughts and actions that disobey God’s will are called “sinful.”
- Because Adam sinned, all human beings are born with a “sinful nature,” a nature that that controls them and causes them to sin.
- A “sinner” is someone who sins, so every human being is a sinner.
- Sometimes the word “sinners” was used by religious people like the Pharisees to refer to people who did not keep the law as well as the Pharisees thought they should.
- The term “sinner” was also used for people who were considered to be worse sinners than other people. For example, this label was given to tax collectors and prostitutes.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “sin” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “disobedience to God” or “going against God’s will” or “evil behavior and thoughts” or “wrongdoing.”
- To “sin” could also be translated as to “disobey God” or to “do wrong.”
- Depending on the context “sinful” could be translated as “full of wrongdoing” or “wicked” or “immoral” or “evil” or “rebelling against God.”
- Depending on the context the term “sinner” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “person who sins” or “person who does wrong things” or “person who disobeys God” or “person who disobeys the law.”

- The term “sinners” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “very sinful people” or “people considered to be very sinful” or “immoral people.”
- Ways to translate “tax collectors and sinners” could include “people who collect money for the government, and other very sinful people” or “very sinful people, including (even) tax collectors.”
- Make sure the translation of this term can include sinful behavior and thoughts, even those that other people do not see or know about.
- The term “sin” should be general, and different from the terms for “wickedness” and “evil.”

(See also: disobey, evil, flesh, tax collector)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 9:1-3
- 1 John 1:10
- 1 John 2:2
- 2 Samuel 7:12-14
- Acts 3:19
- Daniel 9:24
- Genesis 4:7
- Hebrews 12:2
- Isaiah 53:11
- Jeremiah 18:23
- Leviticus 4:14
- Luke 15:18
- Matthew 12:31
- Romans 6:23
- Romans 8:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:15** God said, “I promise I will never again curse the ground because of the evil things people do, or destroy the world by causing a flood, even though people are **sinful** from the time they are children.”
- **13:12** God was very angry with them because of their **sin** and planned to destroy them.
- **20:1** The kingdoms of Israel and Judah both **sinned** against God. They broke the covenant that God made with them at Sinai.
- **21:13** The prophets also said that the Messiah would be perfect, having no **sin**. He would die to receive the punishment for other people’s **sin**.
- **35:1** One day, Jesus was teaching many tax collectors and other **sinners** who had gathered to hear him.
- **38:5** Then Jesus took a cup and said, “Drink this. It is my blood of the New Covenant that is poured out for the forgiveness of **sins**.”
- **43:11** Peter answered them, “Every one of you should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that God will forgive your **sins**.”
- **48:8** We all deserve to die for our **sins**!
- **49:17** Even though you are a Christian, you will still be tempted to **sin**. But God is faithful and says that if you confess your **sins**, he will forgive you. He will give you strength to fight against **sin**.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0817, H0819, H2398, H2399, H2400, H2401, H2402, H2403, H2408, H2409, H5771, H6588, H7683, H7686, G02640, G02650, G02660, G02680, G03610, G37810, G39000, G42580

1 John References:

1 John Introduction 1 John 1:7 1 John 1:8 1 John 1:9 1 John 1:9 1 John 1:10 1 John 2:1 1 John 2:1 1 John 2:2 1 John 2:12 1 John 3:4 1 John 3:4 1 John 3:5 1 John 3:5 1 John 3:6 1 John 3:6 1 John 3:8 1 John 3:8 1 John 3:9 1 John 3:9 1 John 4:10 1 John 5:16 1 John 5:16 1 John 5:16 1 John 5:16 1 John 5:17 1 John 5:17 1 John 5:18

Son of God, the Son

Definition:

The term "Son of God" refers to Jesus, the Word of God, who came into the world as a human being. He is also often referred to as "the Son."

- The Son of God has the same nature as God the Father, and is fully God.
- God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are all of one essence.
- Unlike human sons, the Son of God has always existed.
- In the beginning, the Son of God was active in creating the world, along with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Because Jesus is God's Son, he loves and obeys his Father, and his Father loves him.

Translation Suggestions:

- For the term "Son of God," it is best to translate "Son" with the same word the language would naturally use to refer to a human son.
- Make sure the word used to translate "son" fits with the word used to translate "father" and that these words are the most natural ones used to express a true father-son relationship in the project language.
- Using a capital letter to begin "Son" may help show that this is talking about God.
- The phrase "the Son" is a shortened form of "the Son of God," especially when it occurs in the same context as "the Father."

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Christ, ancestor, God, God the Father, Holy Spirit, Jesus, son, sons of God)

Bible References:

- 1 John 4:10
- Acts 9:20
- Colossians 1:17
- Galatians 2:20
- Hebrews 4:14
- John 3:18
- Luke 10:22
- Matthew 11:27
- Revelation 2:18
- Romans 8:29

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **22:5** The angel explained, "The Holy Spirit will come to you, and the power of God will overshadow you. So the baby will be holy, the **Son of God**."
- **24:9** God had told John, "The Holy Spirit will come down and rest on someone you baptize. That person is **the Son of God**."
- **31:8** The disciples were amazed. They worshiped Jesus, saying to him, "Truly, you are **the Son of God**."
- **37:5** Martha answered, "Yes, Master! I believe you are the Messiah, the **Son of God**."
- **42:10** "So go, make disciples of all people groups by baptizing them in the name of the Father, **the Son**, and the Holy Spirit, and by teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."
- **46:6** Right away, Saul began preaching to the Jews in Damascus, saying, "Jesus is the **Son of God**!"
- **49:9** But God loved everyone in the world so much that he gave his only **Son** so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be punished for his sins, but will live with God forever.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0426, H0430, H1121, H1247, G23160, G52070

1 John References:

1 John 1:3 1 John 1:7 1 John 2:22 1 John 2:23 1 John 2:23 1 John 2:24 1 John 3:8 1 John 3:23 1 John 4:9 1 John 4:10 1 John 4:14 1 John 4:15 1 John 5:5 1 John 5:9 1 John 5:10 1 John 5:10 1 John 5:11 1 John 5:12 1 John 5:12 1 John 5:13 1 John 5:20 1 John 5:20

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

1 John References:

1 John 4:1 1 John 4:1 1 John 4:2 1 John 4:3 1 John 4:6 1 John 4:6

test, tested, testing, testing in the fire

Definition:

The term “test” refers to a difficult or painful experience that reveals a person’s strengths and weaknesses.

- God tests people, but he does not tempt them to sin. Satan, however, tempts people to sin.
- God sometimes uses tests to expose people’s sin. A test helps a person to turn away from sin and to draw closer to God.
- Gold and other metals are tested with fire to find out how pure and strong they are. This is a picture of how God uses painful circumstances to test his people.
- To “put to the test” can mean, “challenge something or someone to prove its value.”
- In the context of putting God to the test, it means to try to make him do a miracle for us, taking advantage of his mercy.
- Jesus told Satan that it is wrong to put God to the test. He is the almighty, holy God who is above everything and everyone.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term to “test” could also be translated as, to “challenge” or to “cause to experience difficulties” or to “prove.”
- Ways to translate “a test” could be, “a challenge” or “a difficult experience.”
- To “put to the test” could be translated as to “test” or to “set up a challenge” or to “force to prove oneself.”
- In the context of testing God, this could be translated as “trying to force God to prove his love.”
- In some contexts, when God is not the subject, the term “test” can mean “tempt.”

(See also: tempt)

Bible References:

- 1 John 4:1
- 1 Thessalonians 5:21
- Acts 15:10
- Genesis 22:1
- Isaiah 7:13
- James 1:12
- Lamentations 3:40-43
- Malachi 3:10
- Philippians 1:10
- Psalm 26:2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5254, H5713, H5715, H5749, H6030, H8584, G12420, G12630, G13030, G13820, G19570, G31400, G31410, G31420, G31430, G39840, G43030, G44510, G48280, G60200

1 John References:

1 John 4:1

testimony, testify, witness, eyewitness, evidence

Definition:

When a person gives "testimony" he makes a statement about something he knows, claiming that the statement is true. To "testify" is to give "testimony."

- In some places in the Old Testament, "Testimony" refers specifically to the tablets of stone on which Yahweh wrote his ten commandments. From that use it came to refer to God's law more broadly.
- Often a person "testifies" about something he has experienced directly.
- A witness who gives "false testimony" does not tell the truth about what happened.
- Sometimes the term "testimony" refers to a prophecy that a prophet has stated.
- In the New Testament, this term was often used to refer to how Jesus' followers testified about the events of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

The term "witness" refers to a person who has personally experienced something that happened. Usually a witness is also someone who testifies about what they know is true. The term "eyewitness" emphasizes that the person was actually there and saw what happened.

- To "witness" something means to see it happen.
- At a trial, a witness "gives witness" or "bears witness." This has the same meaning as "testify."
- Witnesses are expected to tell the truth about what they have seen or heard.
- A witness who does not tell the truth about what happened is called a "false witness." He is said to "give false witness" or to "bear false witness."
- The expression "be a witness between" means that something or someone will be evidence that a contract has been made. The witness will make sure each person does what he has promised to do.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term "testify" or "give testimony" could also be translated as "tell the facts" or "tell what was seen or heard" or "tell from personal experience" or "give evidence" or "tell what happened."
- Ways to translate "testimony" could include, "report of what happened" or "statement of what is true" or "evidence" or "what has been said" or "prophecy."
- Ways to translate "Testimony" could include, "the stone slabs on which I wrote my commands" or "God's law" or "God's commands" or "the record of the agreement between Yahweh and Israel."
- The phrase, "as a testimony to them" could be translated as to "show them what is true" or to "prove to them what is true."
- The phrase, "as a testimony against them" could be translated as "which will show them their sin" or "exposing their hypocrisy" or "which will prove that they are wrong."
- To "give false testimony" could be translated as "say false things about" or "state things that are not true."
- The term "witness" or "eyewitness" could be translated with a word or phrase that means "person seeing it" or "the one who saw it happen" or "those who saw and heard (those things)."
- Something that is "a witness" could be translated as "guarantee" or "sign of our promise" or "something that testifies that this is true."
- The phrase "you will be my witnesses" could also be translated as "you will tell other people about me" or "you will teach people the truth that I taught you" or "you will tell people what you have seen me do and heard me teach."
- To "witness to" could be translated as to "tell what was seen" or to "testify" or to "state what happened."

- To “witness” something could be translated as to “see something” or to “experience something happen.”

(See also: ark of the covenant, guilt, judge, prophet, true)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 31:28
- Micah 6:3
- Matthew 26:60
- Mark 1:44
- John 1:7
- John 3:33
- Acts 4:32-33
- Acts 7:44
- Acts 13:31
- Romans 1:9
- 1 Thessalonians 2:10-12
- 1 Timothy 5:19-20
- 2 Timothy 1:8
- 2 Peter 1:16-18
- 1 John 5:6-8
- 3 John 1:12
- Revelation 12:11

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **39:2** Inside the house, the Jewish leaders put Jesus on trial. They brought many **false witnesses** who lied about him.
- **39:4** The high priest tore his clothes in anger and shouted, “We do not need any more **witnesses**. You have heard him say that he is the Son of God. What is your judgment?”
- **42:8** “It was also written in the scriptures that my disciples will proclaim that everyone should repent in order to receive forgiveness for their sins. They will do this starting in Jerusalem, and then go to all people groups everywhere. You are **witnesses** of these things.”
- **43:7** “We are **witnesses** to the fact that God raised Jesus to life again.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5707, H5713, H5715, H5749, H6030, H8584, G02670, G12630, G19570, G26490, G31400, G31410, G31420, G31430, G31440, G43030, G48280, G49010, G55750, G55760, G55770, G60200

1 John References:

1 John 1:2 1 John 4:14 1 John 5:6 1 John 5:7 1 John 5:9 1 John 5:9 1 John 5:9 1 John 5:9 1 John 5:10 1 John 5:10 1 John 5:10 1 John 5:11

will of God

Definition:

The “will of God” refers to God’s desires and plans.

- God’s will especially relates to his interactions with people and how he wants people to respond to him.
- It also refers to his plans or desires for the rest of his creation.
- The term to “will” means to “determine” or to “desire.”

Translation Suggestions:

- The “will of God” could also be translated as “what God desires” or “what God has planned” or “God’s purpose” or “what is pleasing to God.”

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:15-17
- 1 Thessalonians 4:3-6
- Colossians 4:12-14
- Ephesians 1:1-2
- John 5:30-32
- Mark 3:33-35
- Matthew 6:8-10
- Psalms 103:21

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6310, H6634, H7522, G10120, G10130, G23070, G23080, G23090, G25960

1 John References:

1 John 2:17 1 John 5:14

word of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, word of truth, scripture

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “word of God” refers to anything that God has communicated to people. This includes spoken and written messages. Jesus is also called “the Word of God.”

- The term “scriptures” means “writings.” It is only used in the New Testament and refers to the Hebrew scriptures, which is the Old Testament. These writings were God’s message that he had told people to write down so that many years in the future people could still read it.
- The related terms “word of Yahweh” and “word of the Lord” often refer to a specific message from God that was given to a prophet or other person in the Bible.
- Sometimes this term occurs as simply “the word” or “my word” or “your word” (when talking about God’s word).
- In the New Testament, Jesus is called “the Word” and “the Word of God.” These titles mean that Jesus fully reveals who God is, because he is God himself.

The term “word of truth” is another way of referring to “God’s word,” which is his message or teaching. It does not refer to just one word.

- God’s word of truth includes everything that God has taught people about himself, his creation, and his plan of salvation through Jesus.
- This term emphasizes the fact that what God has told us is true, faithful, and real.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this term could include “the message of Yahweh” or “God’s message” or “the teachings from God.”

- It may be more natural in some languages to make this term plural and say “God’s words” or “the words of Yahweh.”

- The expression “the word of Yahweh came” is often used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. This could be translated as “Yahweh spoke this message” or “Yahweh spoke these words.”

- The term “scripture” or “scriptures” could be translated as “the writings” or “the written message from God.” This term should be translated differently from the translation of the term “word.”

- When “word” occurs alone and it refers to God’s word, it could be translated as “the message” or “God’s word” or “the teachings.” Also consider the alternate translations suggested above.

- When the Bible refers to Jesus as “the Word,” this term could be translated as “the Message” or “the Truth.”

- “Word of truth” could be translated as “God’s true message” or “God’s word, which is true.”

- It is important for the translation of this term to include the meaning of being true.

(See also: prophet, true, Yahweh)

Bible References:

- Genesis 15:1
- 1 Kings 13:1
- Jeremiah 36:1-3
- Luke 8:11
- John 5:39
- Acts 6:2
- Acts 12:24
- Romans 1:2
- 2 Corinthians 6:7
- Ephesians 1:13
- 2 Timothy 3:16
- James 1:18
- James 2:8-9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **25:7** In **God’s word** he commands his people, “Worship only the Lord your God and only serve him.”
- **33:6** So Jesus explained, “The seed is the **word of God**.”
- **42:3** Then Jesus explained to them what **God’s word** says about the Messiah.
- **42:7** Jesus said, “I told you that everything written about me in **God’s word** must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds so they could understand **God’s word**.
- **45:10** Philip also used other **scriptures** to tell him the good news of Jesus.
- **48:12** But Jesus is the greatest prophet of all. He is the **Word of God**.
- **49:18** God tells you to pray, to study his **word**, to worship him with other Christians, and to tell others what he has done for you.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0561, H0565, H1697, H3068, G30560, G44870

1 John References:

1 John 1 Introduction 1 John 2:14

world, worldly

Definition:

The term “world” usually refers to the part of the universe where people live: the earth. The term “worldly” describes the evil values and behaviors of people living in this world.

- In its most general sense, the term “world” refers to the heavens and the earth, as well as everything in them.
- In many contexts, “world” actually means “people in the world.”
- Sometimes it is implied that this refers to the evil people on earth or the people who do not obey God.
- The apostles also used “world” to refer to the selfish behaviors and corrupt values of the people living in this world. This can include self-righteous religious practices which are based on human efforts.
- People and things characterized by these values are said to be “worldly.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “world” could also be translated as “universe” or “people of this world” or “corrupt things in the world” or “evil attitudes of people in the world.”
- The phrase “all the world” often means “many people” and refers to the people living in a certain region. For example, “all the world came to Egypt” could be translated as “many people from the surrounding countries came to Egypt” or “people from all the countries surrounding Egypt came there.”
- Another way to translate “all the world went to their hometown to be registered in the Roman census” would be “many of the people living in regions ruled by the Roman empire went…”
- Depending on the context, the term “worldly” could be translated as “evil” or “sinful” or “selfish” or “ungodly” or “corrupt” or “influenced by the corrupt values of people in this world.”
- The phrase “saying these things in the world” can be translated as “saying these things to the people of the world.”
- In other contexts, “in the world” could also be translated as “living among the people of the world” or “living among ungodly people.”

(See also: corrupt, heaven, Rome, godly)

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:15
- 1 John 4:5
- 1 John 5:5
- John 1:29
- Matthew 13:36-39

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0776, H2309, H2465, H5769, H8398, G10930, G28860, G28890, G36250

1 John References:

1 John 2:2 1 John 2:15 1 John 2:15 1 John 2:15 1 John 2:16 1 John 2:16 1 John 2:17 1 John 3:1 1 John 3:13 1 John 3:17 1 John 4:1 1 John 4:3 1 John 4:4 1 John 4:5 1 John 4:5 1 John 4:5 1 John 4:9 1 John 4:14 1 John 4:17 1 John 5:4 1 John 5:4 1 John 5:5 1 John 5:19

Cain

Definition:

Cain and his younger brother Abel were the first sons of Adam and Eve mentioned in the Bible.

- Cain was a farmer who produced food crops while Abel was a sheep herder.
- Cain killed his brother Abel in a fit of jealousy because God had accepted Abel's sacrifice but had not accepted Cain's sacrifice.
- As punishment, God sent him away from Eden and told him that the land would no longer yield crops for him.
- God put a mark on Cain's forehead as a sign that God would protect him from being killed by other people as he wandered.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Adam, sacrifice)

Bible References:

- 1 John 3:12
- Genesis 4:2
- Genesis 4:9
- Genesis 4:15
- Hebrews 11:4
- Jude 1:11

Word Data:

- Strong's: H7014, G25350

1 John References:

1 John 3:12

day

Definition:

The term "day" generally refers to the time it takes for the alternating periods of light and darkness in the sky to complete one cycle (that is, 24 hours). However, in the Bible the same term is often used to refer to a shorter period of time (such as the time between sunrise and sunset) or a longer period of time that is often not specified.

- "Day" is sometimes used in contrast to "night." In these cases, the term refers to the period of time when the sky is light.
- The term may also refer to a specific point in time, such as "today."
- Sometimes the term "day" is used figuratively to refer to a longer period of time, such as the "day of Yahweh" or "last days." Some languages will use a different expression to translate these figurative uses or will translate "day" non-figuratively.

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term literally as "day" or "daytime" using the word in your language that refers to the part of the day when there is light.
- Other translations of "day" could include "daytime," "time," "season," "occasion" or "event," depending on the context.

(See also: time, judgment day, last day)

Bible References:

- Acts 20:6
- Daniel 10:4
- Ezra 6:15
- Ezra 6:19
- Matthew 9:15

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3117, H3118, H6242, G22500

1 John References:

1 John 4:17

hour, moment

Definition:

The term “hour” is often used in the Bible to tell what time of day a certain event took place. It is also used figuratively to mean “time” or “moment.”

- The Jews counted daylight hours starting at sunrise (around 6 AM). For example, “the ninth hour” meant “around three in the afternoon.”
- Nighttime hours were counted starting at sunset (around 6 PM). For example, “the third hour of the night” meant “around nine in the evening” in our present-day system.
- Since references to time in the Bible will not correspond exactly to the present-day time system, phrases such as “around nine” or “about six o’clock” could be used.
- Some translations might add phrases like “in the evening” or “in the morning” or “in the afternoon” to make it clear what time of day is being talked about.
- The phrase, “in that hour” could be translated as “at that time” or “in that moment.”
- Referring to Jesus, the expression “his hour had come” could be translated as “the time had come for him to” or “the appointed time for him had come.”

Bible References:

- Acts 2:15
- John 4:51-52
- Luke 23:44
- Matthew 20:3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H8160, G56100

1 John References:

1 John 2:18 1 John 2:18

deceive, lie, deception, illusion

Definition:

The term “deceive” means to cause someone to believe something that is not true, often by telling a “lie.” The act of deceiving someone is called “lying,” “deceit,” or “deception.”

- Someone who causes others to believe something false is a “deceiver.” For example, Satan is called a “deceiver.” The evil spirits that he controls are also deceivers.
- To “lie” is to say something that is not true.
- A person, action, or message that is not truthful can be described as “deceptive.”
- The terms “deceit” and “deception” have the same meaning, but there are some small differences in how they are used.
- The descriptive terms “deceitful” and “deceptive” have the same meaning and are used in the same contexts.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “deceive” could include “lie to” or “cause to have a false belief” or “cause someone to think something that is not true.”
- The term “deceived” could also be translated as “caused to think something false” or “lied to” or “tricked” or “fooled” or “misled.”
- “Deceiver” could be translated as “liar” or “one who misleads” or “someone who deceives.”
- Depending on the context, the terms “deception” or “deceit” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “falsehood” or “lying” or “trickery” or “dishonesty.”
- The terms “deceptive” or “deceitful” could be translated as “untruthful” or “misleading” or “lying” to describe a person who speaks or acts in a way that causes other people to believe things that are not true.

(See also: true)

Bible References:

- 1 John 1:8
- 1 Timothy 2:14
- 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4
- Genesis 3:12-13
- Genesis 31:26-28
- Leviticus 19:11-12
- Matthew 27:64
- Micah 6:11

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0898, H2048, H3577, H3584, H3868, H4123, H4820, H4860, H5230, H5377, H5558, H6121, H6231, H6601, H7411, H7423, H7683, H7686, H7952, H8267, H8496, H8582, H8591, H8649, G05380, G05390, G13860, G13870, G13880, G18180, G38840, G41050, G41060, G41080, G54220, G54230

1 John References:

1 John 1:8 1 John 3:7 1 John 4:6

declare, proclaim, announce

Definition:

The terms "declare" and "declaration" refer to making a formal or public statement, often to emphasize something. Other terms with similar meaning include "proclaim," "proclamation," "announce," and "announcement."

- A "declaration" not only emphasizes the importance of what is being proclaimed, but it also calls attention to the one making the declaration.
- For example, in the Old Testament, a message from God is often preceded by "the declaration of Yahweh" or "this is what Yahweh declares." This expression emphasizes that it is Yahweh himself who is saying this. The fact that the message comes from Yahweh shows how important that message is.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, "declare" could also be translated as "proclaim" or "publicly state" or "strongly say" or "emphatically state."
- The term "declaration" could also be translated as "statement" or "proclamation."
- The phrase "this is Yahweh's declaration" could be translated as "this is what Yahweh declares" or "this is what Yahweh says."

(See also: preach, decree)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 16:24
- 1 Corinthians 15:31-32
- 1 Samuel 24:17-18
- Amos 2:16
- Ezekiel 5:11-12
- Matthew 7:21-23

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0262, H0559, H0816, H0874, H1696, H3045, H4853, H5002, H5042, H5046, H5608, H6567, H7121, H7561, H7878, H8085, G03120, G05180, G06690, G12290, G13440, G15550, G17180, G18340, G20970, G25110, G26050, G26070, G31400, G36700, G37240, G38220, G38700, G39550, G42960

1 John References:

1 John 1:2 1 John 1:3 1 John 1:5

false prophet

Definition:

A false prophet is a person who wrongly claims that his message comes from God.

- The prophecies of false prophets are not usually fulfilled. That is, they do not come true.
- False prophets teach messages that partially or totally contradict what the Bible says.
- This term could also be translated as "person who falsely claims to be God's spokesman" or "someone who falsely claims to speak God's words."
- The New Testament teaches that in the end times there will be many false prophets who will try to deceive people into thinking that they come from God.

(See also: fulfill, prophet, true)

Bible References:

- 1 John 4:1-3
- 2 Peter 2:1
- Acts 13:6-8
- Luke 6:26
- Matthew 7:16
- Matthew 24:23-25

Word Data:

- Strong's: G55780

1 John References:

1 John 4:1

joy, joyful, rejoice, glad

Definition:

joy

The term "joy" refers to a feeling of delight or deep satisfaction. The related term "joyful" describes a person who feels very glad and is full of deep happiness.

- A person feels joy when he has a deep sense that what he is experiencing is very good.
- God is the one who gives true joy to people.
- Having joy does not depend on pleasant circumstances. God can give people joy even when very difficult things are happening in their lives.
- Sometimes places are described as joyful, such as houses or cities. This means that the people who live there are joyful.

rejoice

The term "rejoice" means to be full of joy and gladness.

- This term often refers to being very happy about the good things that God has done.
- It could be translated as "be very happy" or "be very glad" or "be full of joy."
- When Mary said "my soul rejoices in God my Savior," she meant "God my Savior has made me very happy" or "I feel so joyful because of what God my Savior has done for me."

Translation Suggestions:

- The term "joy" could also be translated as "gladness" or "delight" or "great happiness."
- The phrase, "be joyful" could be translated as "rejoice" or "be very glad" or it could be translated "be very happy in God's goodness."
- A person who is joyful could be described as "very happy" or "delighted" or "deeply glad."
- A phrase such as "make a joyful shout" could be translated as "shout in a way that shows you are very happy."
- A "joyful city" or "joyful house" could be translated as "city where joyful people live" or "house full of joyful people" or "city whose people are very happy." (See: metonymy)

Bible References:

- Nehemiah 8:10
- Psalm 48:2
- Isaiah 56:6-7
- Jeremiah 15:15-16
- Matthew 2:9-10
- Luke 15:7
- Luke 19:37-38
- John 3:29
- Acts 16:32-34
- Romans 5:1-2
- Romans 15:30-32
- Galatians 5:23
- Philippians 4:10-13
- 1 Thessalonians 1:6-7
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16
- Philemon 1:4-7
- James 1:2
- 3 John 1:1-4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **33:7** "The rocky ground is a person who hears God's word and accepts it with **joy**."
- **34:4** "The kingdom of God is also like hidden treasure that someone hid in a field.. Another man found the treasure and then buried it again. He was so filled with **joy**, that he went and sold everything he had and used the money to buy that field."
- **41:7** The women were full of fear and great **joy**. They ran to tell the disciples the good news.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1523, H1524, H1525, H2302, H2304, H2305, H2654, H2898, H4885, H5937, H5947, H5965, H5970, H6342, H6670, H7440, H7442, H7444, H7445, H7797, H7832, H8055, H8056, H8057, H8342, H8643, G00200, G00210, G21650, G21670, G27440, G46400, G47960, G49130, G54630, G54790

1 John References:

1 John 1:4

know, knew, knowledge, known, 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:

- Strong’s: H1844, H1847, H3045, H3046, H3318, G00500, G00560, G03190, G10970, G11070, G11080, G11100, G14920, G19210, G19220, G19870, G42670

1 John References:

1 John 2:3 1 John 2:3 1 John 2:4 1 John 2:5 1 John 2:11 1 John 2:13 1 John 2:14 1 John 2:14 1 John 2:18 1 John 2:20 1 John 2:21 1 John 2:21 1 John 2:29 1 John 2:29 1 John 3:1 1 John 3:1 1 John 3:2 1 John 3:5 1 John 3:6 1 John 3:14 1 John 3:15 1 John 3:16 1 John 3:19 1 John 3:20 1 John 3:24 1 John 4:2 1 John 4:6 1 John 4:6 1 John 4:7 1 John 4:8 1 John 4:13 1 John 4:16 1 John 5:2 1 John 5:13 1 John 5:15 1 John 5:15 1 John 5:18 1 John 5:19 1 John 5:20 1 John 5:20

lawful, unlawful, not lawful, lawless, lawlessness

Definition:

The term “lawful” refers to something that is permitted to be done according to a law or other requirement. The opposite of this is “unlawful,” which simply means “not lawful.”

- In the Bible, something was “lawful” if it was permitted by God’s moral law, or by the Law of Moses and other Jewish laws. Something that was “unlawful” was “not permitted” by those laws.
- To do something “lawfully” means to do it “properly” or “in the right way.”
- Many of the things that the Jewish laws considered lawful or not lawful were not in agreement with God’s laws about loving others.
- Depending on the context, ways to translate “lawful” could include “permitted” or “according to God’s law” or “following our laws” or “proper” or “fitting.”
- The phrase “Is it lawful?” could also be translated as “Do our laws allow?” or “Is that something our laws permit?”

The terms “unlawful” and “not lawful” are used to describe actions that break a law.

- In the New Testament, the term “unlawful” is not only used to refer to breaking God’s laws, but also often refers to breaking Jewish man-made laws.
- Over the years, the Jews added to the laws that God gave to them. The Jewish leaders would call something “unlawful” if it did not conform to their man-made laws.
- When Jesus and his disciples were picking grain on a Sabbath day, the Pharisees accused them of doing something “unlawful” because it was breaking the Jewish laws about not working on that day.
- When Peter stated that eating unclean foods was “unlawful” for him, he meant that if he ate those foods he would be breaking the laws God had given the Israelites about not eating certain foods.

The term “lawless” describes a person who does not obey laws or rules. When a country or group of people are in a state of “lawlessness,” there is widespread disobedience, rebellion, or immorality.

- A lawless person is rebellious and does not obey God’s laws.
- The apostle Paul wrote that in the last days there will be a “man of lawlessness,” or a “lawless one,” who will be influenced by Satan to do evil things.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term “unlawful” should be translated using a word or expression that means “not lawful” or “lawbreaking.”
- Other ways to translate “unlawful” could be “not permitted” or “not according to God’s law” or “not conforming to our laws.”
- The expression “against the law” has the same meaning as “unlawful.”
- The term “lawless” could also be translated as “rebellious” or “disobedient” or “law-defying”.
- The term “lawlessness” could be translated as “not obeying any laws” or “rebellion (against God’s laws).”
- The phrase “man of lawlessness” could be translated as “man who does not obey any laws” or “man who rebels against God’s laws.”
- It is important to keep the concept of “law” in this term, if possible.
- Note that the term “unlawful” has a different meaning from this term.

(See also: law, law, Moses, Sabbath)

Bible References:

- Matthew 7:21-23
- Matthew 12:2
- Matthew 12:4
- Matthew 12:10
- Mark 3:4
- Luke 6:2
- Acts 2:23
- Acts 10:28
- Acts 22:25
- 2 Thessalonians 2:3
- Titus 2:14
- 1 John 3:4-6

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6530, G01110, G01130, G02660, G04580, G04590, G18320, G35450

1 John References:

1 John 3:4 1 John 3:4

lust, lustful, passion, desire

Definition:

Lust is a very strong desire, usually in the context of wanting something sinful or immoral. To lust is to have lust.

- In the Bible, “lust” usually referred to sexual desire for someone other than one’s own spouse.
- Sometimes this term was used in a figurative sense to refer to worshiping idols.
- Depending on the context, “lust” could be translated as “wrong desire” or “strong desire” or “wrongful sexual desire” or “strong immoral desire” or to “strongly desire to sin.”
- The phrase to “lust after” could be translated as to “wrongly desire” or to “think immorally about” or to “immorally desire.”

(See also: adultery, false god)

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:16
- 2 Timothy 2:22
- Galatians 5:16
- Galatians 5:19-21
- Genesis 39:7-9
- Matthew 5:28

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0183, H0185, H0310, H1730, H2181, H2183, H2530, H5178, H5375, H5689, H5691, H5869, H7843, G07660, G19370, G19390, G22370, G37150, G38060

1 John References:

1 John 2:16 1 John 2:16 1 John 2:17

perfect, complete

Definition:

In the New Testament, the term “perfect” means to be mature in our Christian life. To perfect something means to work at it until it is excellent and without flaws. Old Testament sacrifices needed to be “perfect” or “complete,” that is, without blemish.

- Being perfect and mature means that a Christian is obedient, not sinless.
- The term “perfect” also has the meaning of being “complete” or “whole.”
- The New Testament book of James states that persevering through trials will produce completeness and maturity in the believer.
- When Christians study the Bible and obey it, they will become more spiritually perfect and mature because they will be more like Christ in their character.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated as “without flaw” or “without error” or “flawless” or “without fault” or “not having any faults.”

(See also: blemish)

Bible References:

- Hebrews 12:2
- James 3:2
- Matthew 5:46-48
- Psalms 19:7-8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3632, H3634, H4359, H8003, H8503, H8537, H8549, H8552, G01990, G26750, G26760, G36470, G50460, G50470, G50480, G50500

1 John References:

1 John 2:5 1 John 4:12 1 John 4:17 1 John 4:18 1 John 4:18

punish, punished, punishment, unpunished

Definition:

The term “punish” means to cause someone to suffer a negative consequence for doing something wrong. The term “punishment” refers to the negative consequence that is given as a result of that wrong behavior.

- Often punishment is intended to motivate a person to stop sinning.
- God punished the Israelites when they disobeyed him, especially when they worshiped false gods. Because of their sin, God allowed their enemies to attack and capture them.
- God is righteous and just, so he has to punish sin. Every human being has sinned against God and deserves punishment.
- Jesus was punished for all the evil things that every person has ever done. He received each person’s punishment on himself even though he did nothing wrong and did not deserve that punishment.
- The expressions “go unpunished” and “leave unpunished” mean to decide not to punish people for their wrongdoing. God often allows sin to go unpunished as he waits for people to repent.

(See also: just, repent, righteous, sin)

Bible References:

- 1 John 4:18
- 2 Thessalonians 1:9
- Acts 4:21
- Acts 7:59-60
- Genesis 4:15
- Luke 23:16
- Matthew 25:46

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **13:7** God also gave many other laws and rules to follow. If the people obeyed these laws, God promised that he would bless and protect them. If they disobeyed them, God would **punish** them.
- **16:2** Because the Israelites kept disobeying God, he **punished** them by allowing their enemies to defeat them.
- **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.
- **48:6** Jesus was the perfect high priest because he took the **punishment** for every sin that anyone has ever committed.
- **48:10** When anyone believes in Jesus, the blood of Jesus takes away that person’s sin, and God’s **punishment** passes over him.
- **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.
- **49:11** Jesus never sinned, but he chose to be **punished** and die as the perfect sacrifice to take away your sins and the sins of every person in the world.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3027, H3256, H4148, H4941, H5221, H5414, H6031, H6064, H6213, H6485, H7999, H8011, H8199, G13490, G15560, G15570, G28490, G38110, G50970

1 John References:

1 John 4:18

receive, welcome, taken up, acceptance

Definition:

The term “receive” generally means to get or accept something that is given, offered, or presented.

- To “receive” can also mean to suffer or experience something, as in “he received punishment for what he did.”
- There is also a special sense in which we can “receive” a person. For example, to “receive” guests or visitors means to welcome them and treat them with honor in order to build a relationship with them.
- To “receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” means we are given the Holy Spirit and welcome him to work in and through our lives.
- To “receive Jesus” means to accept God’s offer of salvation through Jesus Christ.
- When a blind person “receives his sight” means that God has healed him and enabled him to see.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “receive” could be translated as “accept” or “welcome” or “experience” or “be given.”
- The expression “you will receive power” could be translated as “you will be given power” or “God will give you power” or “power will be given to you (by God)” or “God will cause the Holy Spirit to work powerfully in you.”
- The phrase “received his sight” could be translated as “was able to see” or “became able to see again” or “was healed by God so that he was able to see.”

(See also: Holy Spirit, Jesus, lord, save)

Bible References:

- 1 John 5:9
- 1 Thessalonians 1:6
- 1 Thessalonians 4:1
- Acts 8:15
- Jeremiah 32:33
- Luke 9:5
- Malachi 3:10-12
- Psalms 49:14-15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **21:13** The prophets also said that the Messiah would be perfect, having no sin. He would die to **receive** the punishment for other people’s sin. His punishment would bring peace between God and people.
- **45:5** As Stephen was dying, he cried out, “Jesus, **receive** my spirit.”
- **49:6** He (Jesus) taught that some people will receive him and be saved, but others will not.
- **49:10** When Jesus died on the cross, he **received** your punishment.
- **49:13** God will save everyone who believes in Jesus and **receives** him as their Master.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3557, H3947, H6901, H6902, H8254, G03080, G03240, G03530, G03540, G05680, G05880, G06180, G11830, G12090, G15230, G16530, G19260, G28650, G29830, G30280, G33350, G33360, G35490, G38580, G38800, G43270, G43550, G43560, G46870, G52640, G55620

1 John References:

1 John 2:27 1 John 3:22 1 John 5:9

seed

Definition:

A “seed” is the part of a plant that gets planted in the ground to reproduce more of the same kind of plant.

- The term “seed” can also refer to what a man plants into a woman that allows them to reproduce.
- Related to this, “seed” is also used to refer to a man‘s or woman‘s offspring or descendants.
- This word often has a plural meaning, referring to more than one seed grain or more than one descendant.
- In the parable of the farmer planting seeds, Jesus compared his seeds to the Word of God, which is planted in people’s hearts in order to produce good spiritual fruit.
- The apostle Paul also uses the term “seed” to refer to the Word of God.

Translation Suggestions:

- For the seed of a plant, use a general term that can apply to all plants, if possible.
- When “seed” refers to people who are of the same family line, it may be more clear to use the word “descendant” or “descendants” instead of “seed.” Some languages may have a word that means “children and grandchildren.”
- For a man or woman’s “seed,” consider how the target expresses this in a way that will not offend or embarrass people.

(See also: children, descendant)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 18:32
- Genesis 1:11
- Jeremiah 2:21
- Matthew 13:8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2232, H2233, H3610, H6507, G46150, G46870, G46900, G47010, G47030

1 John References:

1 John 3:9

shame, ashamed, disgrace, humiliate, reproach

Definition:

The term “shame” refers to the painful feeling of being disgraced or humiliated that a person feels when they do something that others consider dishonorable or improper.

- Something that is “shameful” is “improper” or “dishonorable.”
- The term “ashamed” describes how a person feels when he has done something improper or dishonorable.
- The term “humiliate” means to cause someone to feel shamed or disgraced, usually publicly. The act of shaming someone is called “humiliation.”
- To “reproach” someone means to criticize or disapprove of that person’s character or behavior.
- The phrase “put to shame” means to defeat people or expose their actions so that they feel ashamed of themselves. The prophet Isaiah said that those who make and worship idols will be put to shame.
- The term “disgraceful” can be used to describe a sinful act or the person who did it. When a person does something sinful, it can cause him to be in a state of disgrace or dishonor.
- Sometimes a person who is doing good things is treated in a way that causes him disgrace or shame. For example, when Jesus was killed on a cross, this was a disgraceful way to die. Jesus had done nothing wrong to deserve this disgrace.
- When God humbles someone, it means that he is causing a prideful person to experience failure to help him overcome his pride. This is different from humiliating someone, which is often done in order to hurt that person.
- Saying that a person is “above reproach” or “beyond reproach” or “without reproach” means that this person behaves in a God-honoring way and there is little or nothing that could be said in criticism of him.

Translation Suggestions

- Ways to translate “disgrace” could include “shame” or “dishonor.”
- Ways to translate “disgraceful” could include “shameful” or “dishonoring.”
- To “humiliate” could also be translated as to “shame” or to “cause to feel shame” or to “embarrass.”
- Depending on the context, ways to translate “humiliation” could include “shame” or “degrading” or “disgrace.”
- The word “reproach” could also be translated as “accusation” or “shame” or “disgrace.”
- To “reproach” could also be translated as to “rebuke” or to “accuse” or to “criticize,” depending on the context.

(See also: dishonor, accuse, rebuke, false god, humble, Isaiah, worship)

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 3:15-17
- 2 Kings 2:17
- 2 Samuel 13:13
- Luke 20:11
- Mark 8:38
- Mark 12:4-5
- 1 Timothy 3:7
- Genesis 34:7
- Hebrews 11:26
- Lamentations 2:1-2
- Psalms 22:6
- Deuteronomy 21:14
- Ezra 9:5
- Proverbs 25:7-8
- Psalms 6:8-10
- Psalms 123:3
- 1 Timothy 5:7-8
- 1 Timothy 6:13-14
- Jeremiah 15:15-16
- Job 16:9-10
- Proverbs 18:3

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0937, H0954, H0955, H1317, H1322, H1421, H1442, H1984, H2490, H2616, H2617, H2659, H2778, H2781, H2865, H3001, H3637, H3639, H3640, H3971, H5007, H5034, H5039, H6030, H6031, H6172, H6256, H7022, H7034, H7036, H7043, H7511, H7817, H8103, H8213, H8216, H8217, H8589, G01520, G01530, G04100, G04220, G04230, G08080, G08180, G08190, G08210, G17880, G17910, G18700, G26170, G30590, G36790, G36800, G36810, G38560, G50140, G51950, G51960, G54840

1 John References:

1 John 2:28

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

1 John References:

1 John 3:18

understand, understanding, thinking

Definition:

The term "understand" means to hear or receive information and know what it means.

- The term "understanding" can refer to "knowledge" or "wisdom" or realizing how to do something.
- To understand someone can also mean to know how that person is feeling.
- While walking on the road to Emmaus, Jesus caused the disciples to understand the meaning of the scriptures about the Messiah.
- Depending on the context, the term "understand" could be translated by "know" or "believe" or "comprehend" or "know what (something) means."
- Often the term "understanding" can be translated by "knowledge" or "wisdom" or "insight."

(See also: believe, know, wise)

Bible References:

- Job 34:16-17
- Luke 2:47
- Luke 8:10
- Matthew 13:12
- Matthew 13:14
- Proverbs 3:5

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0995, H0998, H0999, H1847, H2940, H3045, H3820, H3824, H4486, H7200, H7919, H7922, H7924, H8085, H8394, G00500, G01450, G01910, G08010, G10970, G11080, G12710, G19210, G19220, G19870, G19900, G26570, G35390, G35630, G49070, G49080, G49200, G54240, G54280, G54290

1 John References:

1 John 5:20