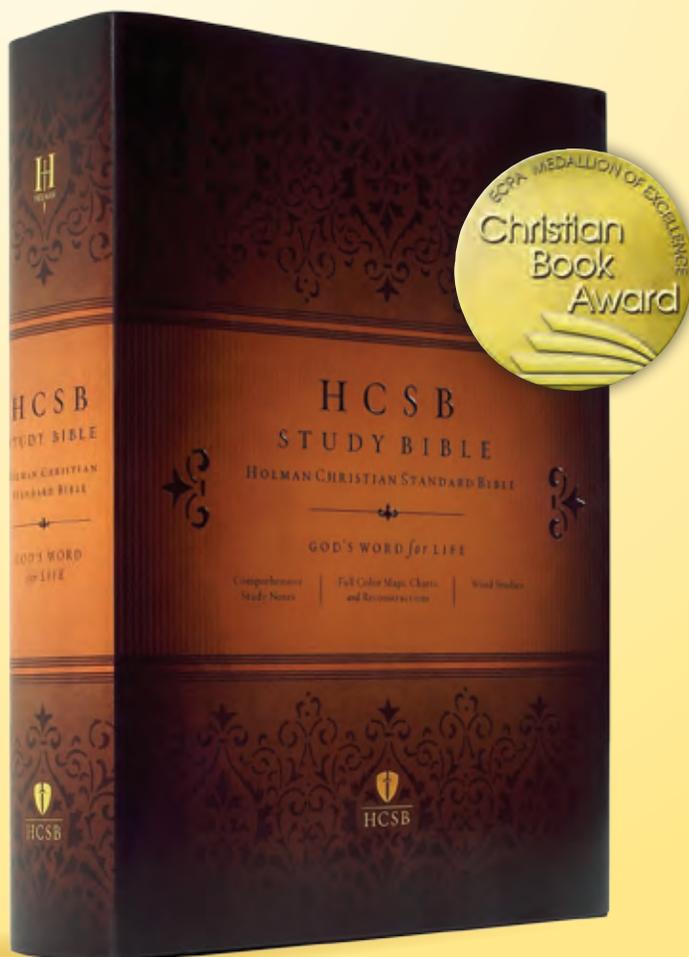


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From My Perspective

Thom S. Rainer, president and CEO, LifeWay Christian Resources

Daily Bible reading leads to spiritual maturity

One of the biggest mistakes I made when I served as pastor was failing to emphasize the importance of every member being in the Word every day.

Brad Waggoner, in his well-researched book, *The Shape of Faith to Come*, notes that regular Bible reading is one of the highest correlates for spiritual maturity. To state it more succinctly, when members read the Bible every day they are more likely to demonstrate spiritual growth in a number of areas.

The implications of this research are enormous. Those Christians who read their Bibles daily are more likely:

- To give generously to the church.
- To be active in a small group or Sunday school class.
- To share their faith more often.
- To spend greater time in prayer.
- To attend worship services regularly.
- To be involved in local ministries and international missions.

Many times I am asked to describe effective approaches to discipleship in the local church. The inquirer is concerned essentially about seeing church members become more devoted followers of Christ and seeing those members more connected to the life and ministry of the local church.

The missing element to these concerns that I see most frequently is an intentional effort to involve as many members in daily Bible reading as possible. The Word of God is powerful and transformative. Reading and studying the Bible daily may be the most important act a Christian can do to grow as a disciple.

Practical steps

I have asked pastors and church leaders to share with me some practical steps they take to get their church members involved in daily Bible reading. Here are some of their responses:

- Have a time of commitment in December to read the Bible through in the next calendar year.



- Emphasize from the pulpit the importance of daily Bible reading.
- Have a plan of daily Bible reading that leads to each week's sermon.
- Provide video testimonies of transformed lives of those who read the Word each day.
- Build a website that allows a community to gather to share with one another what they are learning from their time in the Bible each day.
- Make certain the pastor and other church leaders speak in both formal and informal settings about their own priority of daily Bible reading.
- Teach a broad overview of the Bible so the members can understand how the chapters and verses they read each day fit in the grand narrative of Scripture.

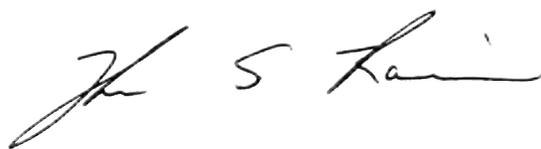
In the Word toward greater discipleship

Too many times we think of local church discipleship as a program where church members meet at a specific time. Ultimately, though, discipleship is really about becoming more like Christ. And we become more like Him as we read and study His Word. The Bible is inspired by the Spirit, so it is transformative for the believer.

It is one the biggest mistakes I made as a pastor. I did not emphasize sufficiently the importance of daily Bible reading. I would do things differently if I were a pastor again. I would do everything in God's strength to get the church members in the Word of God each day.

If you do, you will likely raise an army of devoted disciples who will transform your church and, ultimately, transform the world.

In His service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thom Rainer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

MORE

Follow more of Thom Rainer's thoughts on his blog: ThomRainer.com.

Bible readers want accuracy, word-for-word translation

by David Roach

Most American Bible readers prefer word-for-word translations of the original Greek and Hebrew over thought-for-thought translations and value accuracy over readability.

That is the finding of a new study by LifeWay Research. A total of 2,000 Bible readers participated in the study through a demographically representative online panel. To qualify, participants had to read the Bible in a typical month either by themselves or as part of a family activity and not merely in a corporate setting.

When asked whether they prefer “word-for-word translations, where the original words are translated as exactly as possible” or “thought-for-thought translations, where the translators attempt to reproduce the intent of the original thought rather than translating the exact words,” 61 percent chose word-for-word.

That includes 33 percent who strongly prefer word-for-word translation and 28 percent who somewhat prefer it. In contrast, 20 percent prefer thought-for-thought, including 6 percent with a strong preference and 14 percent who somewhat prefer it. Fourteen percent say both translation philosophies are equally fine, and 5 percent are not sure.

Regarding accuracy, respondents were asked, “In general, what is more important to you in a Bible: total accuracy to the original words, or easy readability?” Three out of four (75 percent) opt for total

accuracy, with 43 percent saying accuracy is much more important and 32 percent saying it is somewhat more important.

Fourteen percent say easy readability is somewhat more important, and 8 percent say it is much more important. Three percent are not sure.

“It is interesting to note that Bible sales do not necessarily follow these preferences,” said Scott McConnell, director of LifeWay Research. “Those reading the Bible each month represent only a portion of all Bible purchasers.

“Bible readers can share their preferences for different translation principles but may not be aware of which characteristics are present in specific translations – even the ones that they own. Without specific instruction most readers will not notice when a translation moves away from a literal or word-for-word translation.”

Respondents hold a variety of opinions regarding the style of language they prefer in a Bible translation for personal reading. Among them:

- 68 percent want language to be simpler to understand while 7 percent want it to be more difficult to understand.
- 81 percent say it should be more enjoyable to read while 4 percent prefer it

“Bible readers can share their preferences for different translation principles but may not be aware of which characteristics are present in specific translations – even the ones that they own.”

– Scott McConnell

to be more of a chore to read.

- 27 percent favor contemporary language while 46 percent want traditional language.

- 36 percent want more modern language while 37 percent favor more old-fashioned language.

- 19 percent feel understanding the language should require a higher level of education while 49 percent say it should not require a higher level of education.

- 63 percent believe it should be simple for anyone to understand while 14 percent say the language should be meant more for people who have a lot of experience with the Bible.

- 40 percent prefer more formal language while 26 percent say should be more informal.

- 22 percent want language more for casual reading while 44 percent say it should be designed more for in-depth study.

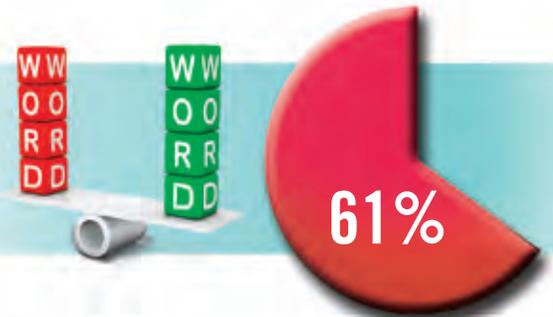
“In the same way drivers want big, powerful, fuel-efficient vehicles, Bible readers want word-for-word translations that are easy to understand,” said McConnell. “As translators try to cross the globe and two millennia, fully accomplishing both is not always possible.”

The survey also asked about translation of God’s name. Though many Bible versions translate God’s name in the Old Testament as “the LORD,” others prefer using what is believed to be the original pronunciation, “Yahweh.”

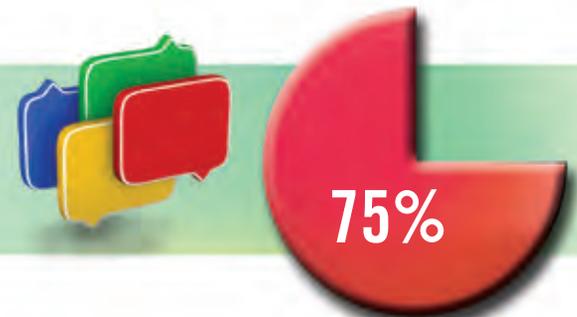
Nearly eight in 10 Bible readers (79 percent) prefer the traditional translation “the LORD” over the original pronunciation “Yahweh.”

KEY FINDINGS

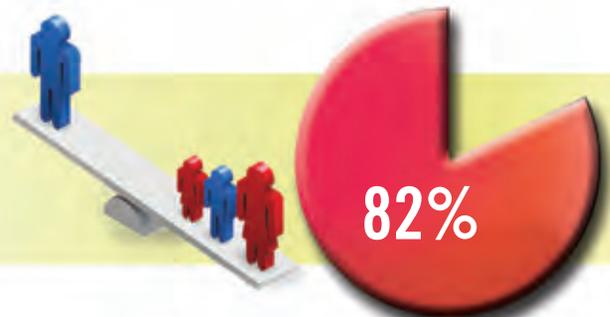
61% of Bible readers prefer a “word-for-word” translation



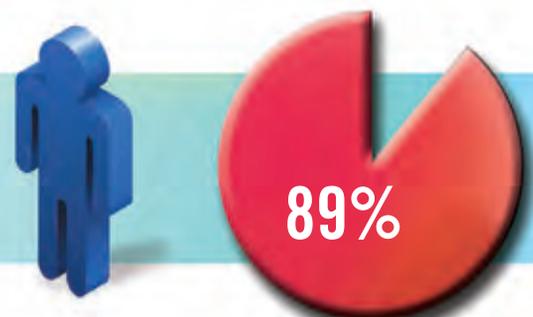
75% of Bible readers prefer a translation with “total accuracy”



82% of Bible readers prefer a literal translation of masculine words



89% of Bible readers prefer a translation with gender-specific references to God



Readers embrace HCSB's choice of 'slave,' survey finds

by David Roach

Three out of four American Bible readers say they prefer a literal translation of Scripture even if some of the words or concepts do not fit easily into modern culture, according to a new study by LifeWay Research.

The study polled 2,000 people through a demographically representative online panel. All participants read their Bibles at least monthly – either for personal study or as part of a family activity. People who read the Bible only in a corporate setting, like a worship service, were not included in the study.

Survey participants were told: “In the original Greek and Hebrew, the Bible occasionally uses words that some might think do not fit in our society today, such as ‘slave.’ Some translators think these should be translated literally as ‘slave,’ while others think they should reflect current context and be translated as ‘servant.’ Which do you prefer?”

Nearly half (46 percent) strongly prefer a literal translation, and 28 percent somewhat prefer a literal translation. Fourteen percent somewhat prefer a translation to reflect current context while 4 percent strongly prefer such a translation. Seven percent are not sure.

The HCSB translates many ancient concepts literally, including “slave,” and uses bullet notes at the end of the Bible to explain them.

“The Bible includes concepts that may be uncomfortable or may require more study to fully understand,” said Scott McConnell, director of LifeWay Research. “This example shows more Bible readers prefer to see the literal translation rather than glossing over such concepts in a translation.” ■

That includes 51 percent who strongly prefer “the LORD” and 27 percent who somewhat prefer it. Seven percent somewhat prefer “Yahweh” while 6 percent strongly prefer it. Eight percent are not sure which they favor.

Bible readers are overwhelmingly opposed to gender-neutral translations of Scripture. A full 82 percent prefer a literal translation of masculine words that describe people in general rather than a more inclusive translation like “humankind” or “person.”

Study participants were told: “Bible translators have to make choices regarding gender issues. For example, the original Greek and Hebrew versions of the Bible often uses masculine words such as those literally meaning ‘man’ to describe people in general. Some translators think these should be translated literally as ‘man’ while others think they should be translated into gender-inclusive terms such as ‘humankind,’ ‘human being,’ ‘person’ or ‘one.’ Which do you prefer?”

A majority (53 percent) strongly prefer literal translation while 29 percent somewhat prefer the literal rendering. Only 9 percent somewhat prefer gender-inclusive translation, and 3 percent strongly prefer it. Six percent are not sure.

Bible readers are even more adamant about not making references to God gender-inclusive.

They were told, “Another issue Bible translators face relates to references to God as ‘father’ in the Greek and Hebrew. Some translators think these should be translated literally as ‘father’ while others think they should be translated into gender-inclusive terms such as ‘parent.’ Do you prefer the literal or more gender-inclusive?”

In response, 89 percent want a literal translation of gender-specific references to God, including 68 percent who strongly prefer literal translation and 21 percent who somewhat prefer literal translation. Five percent somewhat prefer gender-inclusive translation, and 2 percent strongly prefer gender-inclusive translation. Four percent are not sure.

“The places in the Bible in which the inspired writers used masculine words for God, a large majority of Bible readers want translators to use masculine words as well,” noted McConnell. “This is true regardless of whether the reader describes their own spiritual beliefs as liberal or conservative.” ■

Oklahoma church embraces HCSB

by Julie McGowan

When the leaders of First Baptist Church of Broken Arrow, Okla., decided to change the version of the Bible used in worship services, pastor Nick Garland knew right away the version he wanted to use: the strong, clear and true Holman Christian Standard Bible.

And while the decision might have been easy for Garland, it was no small consideration. Each week, Garland is responsible for preaching God's Word during two Sunday morning services in a worship center which seats about 1,500 people on the church's main campus. He also must consider the satellite campus the church will be launching this fall.

"I am a biblical conservative and strongly believe that Bible translators should translate as closely as possible to the Greek and Hebrew texts," Garland said. "For me, the HCSB has done that well."

Garland has been

Pastor Nick Garland



The church praise team leads worship on Sunday morning. Photos by Kent Harville

Garland has been familiar with the HCSB for several years. As a LifeWay trustee, he was part of the board that urged the organization to consider publishing a new translation of the Bible.

“With the theological world adrift and not in unity regarding the veracity, full authority and absolute infallibility of Scripture, we needed a translation that was reliable and sure for Southern Baptists and conservative Christians to use,” Garland said.

Specifically, Garland said he appreciates that the text of the HCSB is not a paraphrase or a “cultural shift” written to appease a modern view of political correctness.

“Rather, the HCSB has sought to remain true scholastically and grammatically to the text of God’s Word,” Garland said. “The Word should change the world, not the world change the Word! I believe that

has been demonstrated by the HCSB.”

During a 20-year process, an international team of 100 scholars and English stylists representing more than 20 different Protestant denominations worked together using the original biblical languages of Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic. The HCSB New Testament was released in 2001 and the full HCSB was released in 2004.

Garland said while he recognized the HCSB as a good text for his congregation, he was slowed in his decision by the practicality of changing from one version to another, having used the same translation for a quarter of a century.

“Like many people, whatever Bible translation one uses in the early days of one’s Christian journey as a leader, that is the one that is kept, read and used,” he said, adding that he had three copies that he used simultaneously – all “studied,

marked, outlined and treasured as my devotional and study Bibles.”

When the HCSB was first published in 2004, Garland received gift copies of the version, which he said he enjoyed reading occasionally, but continued to rely on his marked-up study Bibles for preaching.

Recently, however, Garland said he became convicted that it was time to switch to a translation that was more trusted and true in its language. He said several reasons contributed to the decision to use the HCSB as his church’s pew Bible and as the Scripture from which he preaches. In an era when LifeWay Research indicates only four in ten (41 percent) American adults say they read the Bible at least once a week, and nearly half (46 percent) say they rarely or never read the Bible, a sound translation must also be readable.

“The text is very easy to read in a modern vernacular,” Garland said. “Even the most difficult texts have greater clarity simply because the language is more readily understood. The passages that people most often call ‘favorites’ read with a simplistic beauty that is memorable.

“The HCSB truly retains the veracity of the text while enhancing the clarity through use of clear verbiage,” he said. “Through the years, some people have found it hard to study the Bible because of archaic phrases and words. HCSB has provided a tremendously accurate

translation that is simple enough for anyone to understand.”

First Baptist Church, Broken Arrow, has ordered about 500 HCSB pew Bibles to be placed in the pews of their main campus and about 75 for the satellite church location – volumes Garland expects to be used during each worship service. Garland noted that he does not put Bible passages on the screen while he is preaching. Instead, he encourages worshipers to bring a Bible or use the provided pew Bible to read the Scripture verses for themselves. He believes when readers handle the Bible, they are more likely to study God’s Word on their own time.

“I would encourage pastors to consider encouraging their people to read from the Bible they are holding so that they can mark a text in their Bible and have it to read later,” he said. “If people grow accustomed to studying the Bible in every worship service, they will want to purchase one of their own to keep and to study. If worshipers use a pew Bible, my hope is that they will stop by our bookstore at the close of worship and buy one for their personal study.”

For churches exploring a new translation for their congregation, Garland said he believes the HCSB is exactly what the LifeWay trustees expected when they commissioned a new translation: a reliable, readable translation. ■

“The Word should change the world, not the world change the Word! I believe that has been demonstrated by the HCSB.”

– Nick Garland

So many Bible choices – What makes one different from another?

by Michael Duduit

For the unenlightened Bible shopper going into a LifeWay Christian Store to select a Bible, it is a bit like going to a Walmart superstore to pick a box of cereal – with the huge selection, where do you even start?

A few years ago, you'd just go to the store, ask for "a Bible," and they'd hand you a copy of the King James Version (KJV) – for centuries "the Bible" for English-speaking audiences. But the last few decades have produced many Bible translations.

If you are thinking about purchasing a Bible for yourself or as a gift, here is a quick guide to help you understand some of the choices available.

Three categories

There are three major categories that represent different approaches to expressing the biblical revelation (originally recorded in Hebrew and Greek) into English.

1. Formal Equivalence

A Formal Equivalence translation takes a word-for-word approach – that is, for each Hebrew or Greek word in the biblical text, the translators have sought an equivalent English word that will communicate the same idea.

The beloved King James Version (KJV) is such a translation, as is the Revised Standard Version (RSV).

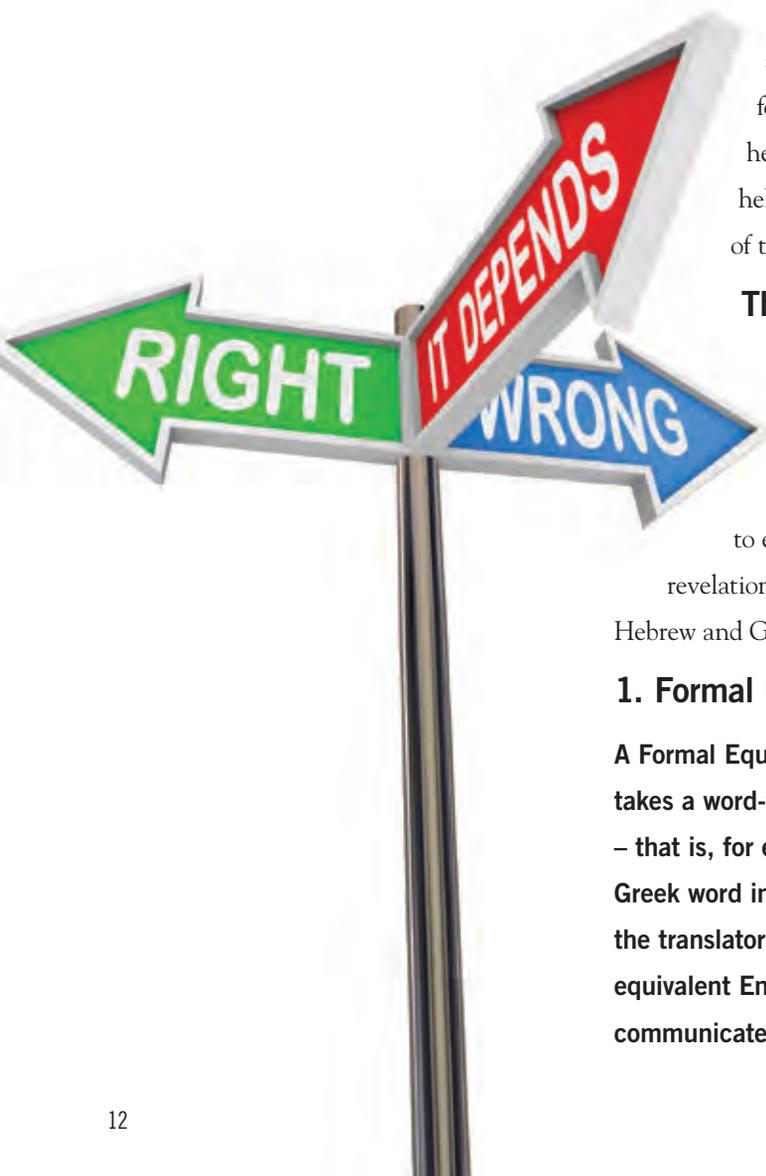
In more recent years, the New American Standard Bible (NASB) has become a popular study Bible because of its very literal rendering of the original languages. But because of the emphasis on word-for-word accuracy, the NASB (which is at an 11th grade reading level) doesn't read as smoothly as many other translations. That makes it a great study Bible but not ideal for public or devotional reading.

A recent Bible translation that has grown quickly in popularity is the English Standard Version (ESV), first published in 2001. The ESV seeks to combine word-for-word accuracy with literary beauty and readability. It also retains many classic theological terms that some other modern translations avoid.

2. Dynamic Equivalence

Unlike the word-for-word translation philosophy of the first group, this category seeks to take a middle road between a literal translation and a thought-for-thought approach to translating the biblical text.

That is, rather than trying to find an equivalent word or words for each word in



the original biblical text, the translators have tried to stay close to the literal meaning of the words while also seeking to capture the ideas of the biblical authors with equivalent language to capture those thoughts in the English text.

The best-known Bible in this category is the New International Version (NIV), which for many years has been the top-selling translation among evangelicals. The NIV is a very readable translation (aimed at a 7th grade reading level). This translation approach means that there are points where the English text reflects an interpretation of the biblical text rather than a literal. For example, where the biblical text may specify a specific cost (100 denarii), the NIV might substitute the value in other terms (four months of a worker's wages) to make the cost more understandable for the reader.

The Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB) is a bit of a hybrid version, in that it uses a translation philosophy called "Optimal Equivalence." That means the HCSB switches between word-for-word and thought-for-thought depending on the translation team's views on a particular passage. The HCSB is also an original translation from Greek and Hebrew texts, as contrasted with those that grew out of KJV tradition, such as RSV.

3. Paraphrases

A paraphrase is a very free rendering of the biblical text in thought-for-thought approach.

In other words, the paraphrase is less concerned with translating the actual words of the text than with capturing the ideas of the biblical author and expressing those in contemporary language.

The first well-known paraphrase for many evangelicals was The Living Bible, in which Kenneth Taylor took an English translation and rephrased it into modern American speech so that anyone (even a child) could understand the message. The New Living Translation was developed by a team of scholars and published as a revision of the LB to enhance the accuracy of the text while retaining the readability of the paraphrase.

The most popular paraphrase of recent years is The Message by Eugene Peterson. It uses contemporary American idioms to keep the language of Scripture fresh and understandable. While not designed for serious study, it's a common choice for devotional reading.

Bottom line

Don't let the variety of options discourage you from choosing a Bible for yourself or as a gift for someone else. Whichever one you choose, God's Word will still make a difference in your life. ■



MORE

Michael Duduit is dean of the College of Christian Studies at Anderson University (AUMinistry.com) and editor of Preaching magazine (Preaching.com).

A large target with a red dart hitting the bullseye. The target has concentric rings of black, white, and black. The dart is red with a silver ferrule and a silver tip.

HCSB upholds

accuracy, readability, translators say

by David Roach

By the mid-1990s, many Bible scholars, pastors and general leaders had come to believe a new Bible translation was needed.

The New American Standard was perhaps the most accurate translation, but some felt it was not easily readable. The New International Version and New Living Translation were the most readable, but some questioned if this readability may have eclipsed accuracy and consistency in places. Other major versions were not translations starting from the original Greek and Hebrew texts, but merely revisions of earlier English translations.

It was time for a new translation.

LifeWay Christian Resources assembled an interdenominational team of more

than 100 scholars, editors, stylists and proofreaders – all committed to biblical inerrancy. After years of work, they produced the Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB) in 2004. A revision was released in 2009.

“Our goal was to be as accurate as the New American Standard but to be as readable as the NIV,” HCSB General Editor Ed Blum said. “And I think if you read our translation, you’ll see that it is readable; it is accurate. ... I would say we’re the most accurate of all the translations.”

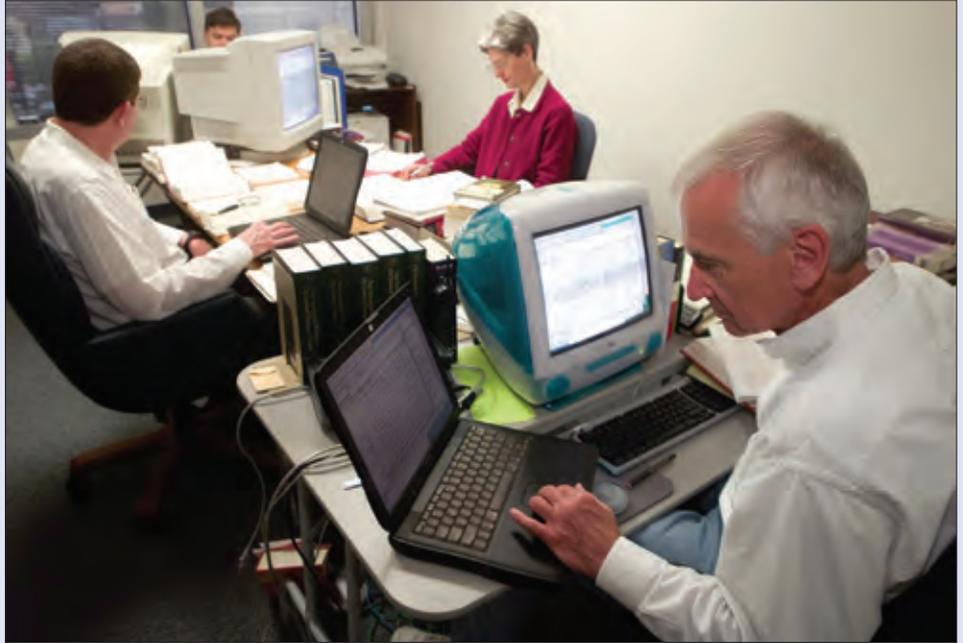
Translation philosophy

Before the HCSB, Bible translations were produced using one of two approaches: Formal Equivalence or Dynamic Equivalence. Formal Equivalence versions translate word-for-word from the Greek and Hebrew texts and preserve the grammatical patterns of the original languages wherever they can be reproduced in understandable English. Dynamic Equivalence versions of Scripture translate thought-for-thought, not always preserving the structure of the original languages since English does not use the same idioms and grammatical patterns as ancient languages.

The HCSB team attempted to capture the best of both approaches by adopting a new approach dubbed “Optimal Equivalence.”

According to this approach, the HCSB translates word-for-word whenever such a translation is clear and readable in modern English. When a literal translation does not meet that standard though, the HCSB uses idiomatic English and puts a literal translation in a footnote labeled “Lit.”

“We share many of the same commitments as Formal Equivalence translations,” said HCSB associate general editor Ray Clendenen. “That is, we try to render word-for-word translation and translate a verb as a verb, an adjective as an adjective and things



Ed Blum, front right, and others from the translation team work on the early stages of the HCSB translation in 2001. Photo by Morris Abernathy

of that sort. And we try to translate a particular Hebrew or Greek word the same way throughout the Bible if it's in the same context.

“But we also share some of the commitments of the Dynamic Equivalence approach,” he said. “For instance, whereas the formal equivalence approach says, ‘If a literal, word-for-word translation makes sense in English, that’s good enough,’ Optimal Equivalence shares with Dynamic Equivalence the value of insisting that the English not only make sense, but that it be natural rather than awkward or wooden.”

Blum added that the HCSB adopts grammatical standards of contemporary American English, not those of British English like the Revised Standard or

English Standard Versions. Practically, that means using American style quotation marks, capitalizing nouns and pronouns that refer to deity, and, for the first time, using contractions like “don’t” and “won’t” where appropriate.

The HCSB also places bullets next to common theological terms the first time they are used in a chapter – more often for particularly important or misunderstood terms. Then a list of definitions for those terms is provided in the back section.

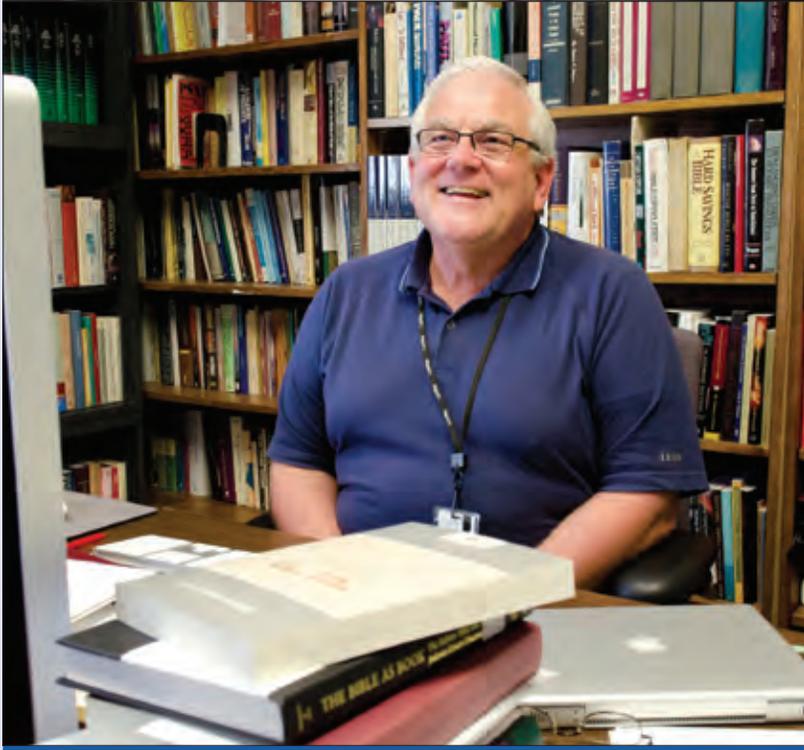
Translation process

Achieving an accurate and readable English translation was not easy, according to Blum. The HCSB team worked 22 times through the Greek text

Jeremy Howard.



Ray Clendenen. Photos by Randy Hughes



“It wasn’t done by Baptists. It was done by a broad array of conservative scholars.”

— Ray Clendenen

“Accuracy and readability are the twin concerns of our approach to Bible translation.”

— Jeremy Howard

of John, for example, and the book of Isaiah took seven months to complete.

Each book went through several drafts, and translators all worked with English language stylists to achieve the most understandable text possible.

David Stabnow, an HCSB Old Testament editor, recalled the give-and-take process of working with a stylist.

“Usually we came to agreement on a translation that was both good English and accurate to the original without much difficulty,” he said. “But every once in a while we struggled to come to agreement. She would say, ‘That’s not good English,’ and I would say, ‘But we need to be accurate.’ As a result, in no case was accuracy compromised.”

“Accuracy and readability are the twin concerns of our approach to Bible translation,” said Jeremy Howard, Bible publisher at LifeWay’s B&H Publishing Group. “The HCSB translation team upheld both of these concerns with every decision they made.”

The translation process was made easier by computer technology. Blum said the HCSB is the first print translation done start-to-finish in the computer age. That allowed the translation team to use Bible software rather than relying exclusively on books. Also, translators communicated rapidly and widely via the Internet, feats that were not possible for translators of previous Bible versions.

All translations were done from standard critical editions of the Greek and Hebrew texts of the Bible, texts compiled by examining all of the available manuscripts and determining what the original authors most likely wrote. In contrast, some other translations are based on texts compiled from far fewer manuscripts.

Wherever there was a question about what the original author wrote, the HCSB team consulted Bible manuscript experts in order to arrive at the best-supported conclusion. In places where various Greek and Hebrew manuscripts contain significant differences, the HCSB includes footnotes saying “Other mss [manuscripts] read ...” or “Other mss omit ...”

Not just by or for Baptists

Some people wrongly believe the HCSB is a Bible “by Southern Baptists for Southern Baptists.” But Clendenen pointed out that more than half of the translation team was not Southern Baptist, including

Blum, who pastored a Presbyterian church and taught at Dallas Theological Seminary. The original general editor, who died early in the HCSB translation process, had a Plymouth Brethren background.

“It wasn’t done by Baptists,” Clendenen said of the HCSB. “It was done by a broad array of conservative scholars.”

The translation team avoided even the appearance of Baptist bias. For example, in passages where the Greek preposition *en* is used to describe baptism – baptism *en* water – the HCSB does not translate the phrase as “baptism in water,” though that is a possible translation. Instead, it renders

the phrase “baptism with water” – also an accurate translation but more widely accepted by evangelical translators as accurate.

The translation team says it wants readers of all denominations to pick up the HCSB because it makes God’s will clear by revealing what He originally inspired the authors of Scripture to write.

“The more accurate and understandable the translation is, the clearer it’s going to be what God is trying to say to you,” Blum said. “I believe God’s message is clear in the HCSB.” ■

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Translation comparisons

More Dynamic
Equivalence



New Living Translation: released in 1996, a translation and revision of the Living Bible, at 6th-7th grade reading level



New International Version: released in 1978, an original translation, at 7th-8th grade reading level



Holman Christian Standard Bible: released in 2004, an original translation, at 7th-8th grade reading level

John 3:16

For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.

Exodus 3:15

God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel: Yahweh, the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you. This is my eternal name, my name to remember for all generations.”

God also said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.’ “This is my name forever, the name you shall call me from generation to generation.”

God also said to Moses, “Say this to the Israelites: Yahweh, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, this is how I am to be remembered in every generation.”

Ephesians 2:12

In those days you were living apart from Christ. You were excluded from citizenship among the people of Israel, and you did not know the covenant promises God had made to them. You lived in this world without God and without hope.

Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.

At that time you were without the Messiah, excluded from the citizenship of Israel, and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, with no hope and without God in the world.

HCSB highlights

John 3:16 – “in this way ...”

Οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον

Literal translation from Greek: “In this way – for – loved – the – God – the – world.” Οὕτως (hoo'-tose); is an adverb telling how God loved the world. The HCSB describes God's love as a verb.

Note: Original release dates used for comparison. Some translations have had updates or changed names since their original release.

Methodology

Translations are ranked on a scale of how closely they relate to each methodology; keep in mind that no one translation is purely in one category and often times will use multiple methods.

Paraphrase:
Interpretation



Dynamic Equivalence:
Thought for thought



Formal Equivalence:
Word for Word



Optimal Equivalence: Term used by HCSB to describe the method of blending dynamic and formal for the most accuracy.

More Formal Equivalence



English Standard Version: released in 2001, based on the Revised Standard Version, at 7th-8th grade reading level



King James Version: released in 1611, based on Tyndale and Bishops Bible, at 11th-12th grade reading level



New American Standard Bible: released in 1971, based on American Standard Version, at 11th grade reading level

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations."

And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.

God, furthermore, said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations."

Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.

Remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

Exodus 3:15 – Use of "Yahweh"

In many Old Testament passages, God discloses יהוה as His personal name. The HCSB translates this word as "Yahweh" in contexts where it is clear God is identifying Himself. Most other translations incorrectly render יהוה as a generic title, LORD, and not a personal name.

Ephesians 2:12 – Use of "Messiah"

The HCSB highlights Jewish messianic expectations by using the word "Messiah."

LifeWay provides Bible study tools for the digital age

by Jon Wilke

Gary Mitchell has spent 20 years as a pastor in small, rural churches. Like many other church leaders across the country, Mitchell held a full-time job to support his ministry work.

“I’ve been bivocational my whole life,” said Mitchell, who is 68 and “retired.” Now, he trains and equips the nearly 1,000 bivocational pastors in the Louisiana Baptist Convention.

“The vast majority of churches are led by a bivocational pastor,” said Mitchell. Nationwide, the Bivocational Small Church Leadership Network estimates there are about 37,000 smaller church pastors, most bivocational, within the Southern Baptist Convention alone.

“Most bivocational pastors are looking

for affordable study tools to assist them in their sermon preparation,” said Mitchell. “They are starved for information and resources. I constantly search for study materials that are easy to use and not overwhelming. Bivocational pastors have limited time and resources.”

One of the main tools that Mitchell tells pastors about is MyStudyBible.com, an online Bible study tool launched by LifeWay in 2010.

“I love the format of MyStudyBible.com,”

said Mitchell. “All the tools are in one spot.”

MyStudyBible.com contains the award-winning HCSB Study Bible and commentary notes, as well as select content from books like the Holman New Testament Commentary and references from Strong’s Greek and Hebrew Dictionary.

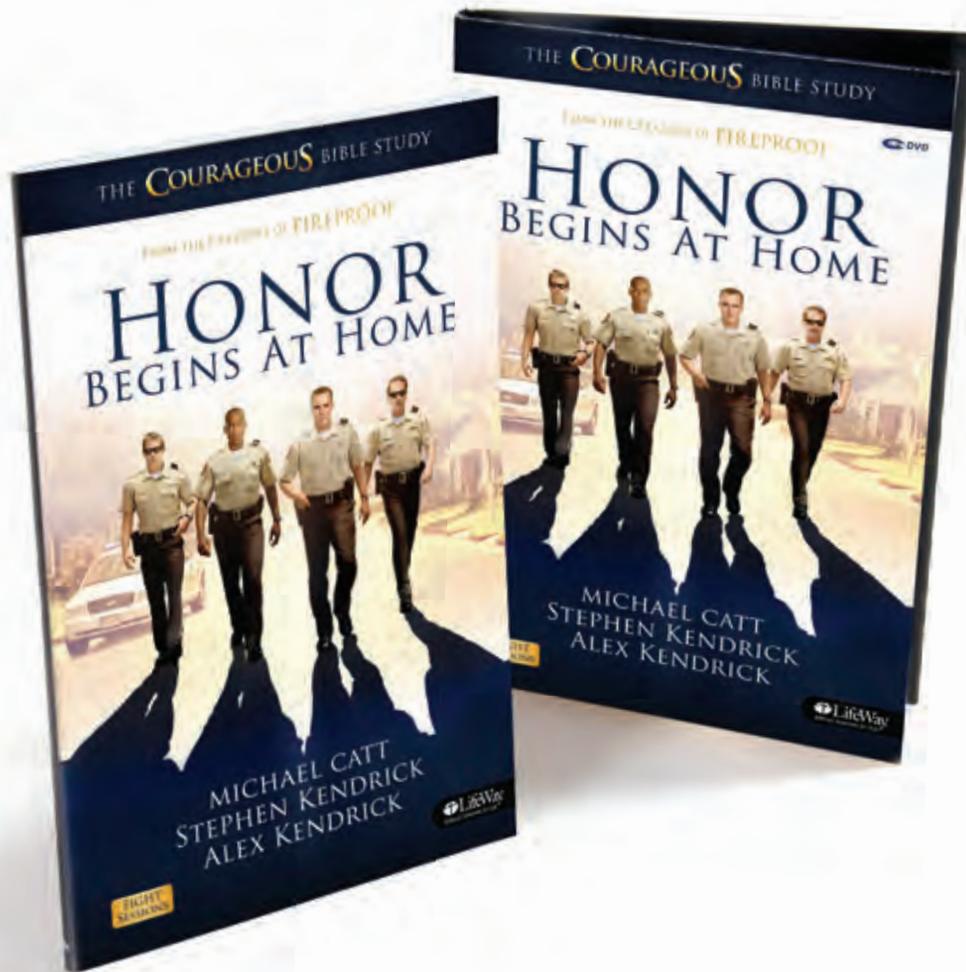
Users can purchase additional content including The Apologetics Study Bible, The Holman Illustrated Study Bible, The Teacher’s Bible Commentary, Word Pictures in the New Testament, The Holman Bible Atlas, *Experiencing God*, and more.

“MyStudyBible.com makes the Bible and some of the best biblical reference materials in the world accessible,” said Paul Mikos, LifeWay’s executive editor of digital publishing. “Now people don’t have to spend \$400 for commentary sets or Bible software. They can dive as deep as they need when they need for as long as they need.”

Simplified biblical research

In July, LifeWay announced the acquisition of the WORDsearch and QuickVerse brands, further strengthening its position as a leader in digital Christian solutions. The addition of these two





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(Center) Thom Rainer, president and CEO of LifeWay, signs documents during the acquisition of WORDsearch and QuickVerse brands. With him, L-R, are Tim Vinyard, LifeWay; Andrew Cogan, Jack Tompkins, Randy Beck, WORDsearch; and David Seibert, LifeWay. Photo by Devin Maddox

powerful Bible software resources is another vital step in LifeWay’s overall digital strategy to serve churches and individuals.

WORDsearch Corp. (WORDsearch Bible.com), based in Austin, Texas, has been producing software and electronic books for the Christian market since 1987. The company offers more than 4,200 volumes of electronic books for Christian pastors, teachers and laypeople through its WORDsearch, Bible Explorer, LESSONmaker, WORDsearchToGo and InstaVerse software products.

WORDsearch and QuickVerse (QuickVerse.com) software simplifies biblical research, allowing a user to view multiple reference materials including Bibles, dictionaries, commentaries and encyclopedias side-by-side on the user’s computer screen. Other QuickVerse software products include SermonBuilder that provides quick access to thousands of Bible-related stories, quotes and anecdotes and various biblical language tools, sermons and stories.

“There is unprecedented growth in practically every area of digital media,

and we continue to seek opportunities to leverage these technologies in spiritually-transforming ways,” said LifeWay President Thom Rainer. “By bringing the strengths of WORDsearch and QuickVerse into the LifeWay portfolio of Christ-centered resources, we offer customers a more robust collection of exciting Kingdom tools.”

By acquiring the assets of these two companies and through other digital offerings such as the launch of the new LifeWay.com, MyStudyBible.com and more than 25 applications for mobile platforms, LifeWay continues to assert a leading strategy in the digital publishing industry. LifeWay’s growing digital products and services span such areas as webcasts, church software, digital downloads, self-publishing, simulcasts, apps, events, online communities, ebooks and other offerings that positions LifeWay as a leading provider of cutting-edge resources for individuals and churches.

“Expense is the biggest obstacle [for bivocational pastors],” said Mitchell, “Most bivocational pastors can’t afford expensive commentaries or the fees for the websites with all the bells and whistles. But, they will invest in these types of tools. These price ranges put invaluable tools within their reach.” ■

1 It brings new meaning and insight into your favorite verses.

For example, take John 3:16 – “For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.” Readers of the verse, when translated “For God so loved the world ...,” will think that the verse says how much God loved. The adverb “so” indicates how much or to what degree. Scholars, however, understand the verse actually describes *how* God loved us, not *how much*. This is the way in which God has demonstrated His love for us: He gave His Son. The HCSB translation makes it clear that the proof of God’s love is the gift of His Son. There is no degree of God’s love. It’s total and complete.



reasons you’ll love the HCSB

There are a number of accurate and reliable English translations of the Bible on the market today. LifeWay Christian Stores sell a lot of them: HCSB, NASB, ESV, NIV, KJV, NKJV and others.

They are all “real” Bibles, aren’t they? They are all God’s Holy Word, right? So why choose the HCSB for your Bible?

There are several key distinctions that make the HCSB a reliable translation. Here are nine of them.

2 A word-for-word translation doesn’t always offer the best translation.

Look at Psalm 147:10. “He is not impressed by the strength of a horse; He does not value the power of a man.” In the NASB and ESV the power of a man is translated literally as “the legs of a man.” The original audience would have understood that “legs” meant the total strength of a man. Using “the power of a man” gives a clearer meaning of what the verse is trying to convey.

4 Biblical figures of speech are often difficult to understand.

Admit it. Sometimes it is hard to understand phrases in the Bible. You could compare it to slang. If you read that someone “lit a shuck” what would come to mind? You would might think it meant that someone set corn on fire ... maybe to use as

a torch ... maybe to destroy an enemy’s crop. But, you’d be wrong. It simply means someone “went away.” At least that what it meant in the 1800s.

When you read Amos 4:6 in the NASB that God gave them “cleanliness of teeth in all their cities,” it sounds like something wonderful. Clean teeth are great and to have a whole city of people with clean teeth ... impressive! The problem, however, is that what we (today) understand cleanliness of teeth to mean isn’t what the Scripture means to communicate. Therefore, HCSB translates the ESV’s “cleanliness of teeth in all their cities” into phrasing we understand: God gave them “absolutely nothing to eat in all your cities” Clean teeth meant teeth that had no food to chew, not glowing pearly whites. It changes how we understand the passage.

3 When God uses His personal name, it should mean something.

Is there a difference in Lord and Yahweh? Aren’t they both names of God? Actually, no, they aren’t. Lord is a title, not a personal name. Yahweh is God’s personal name, not a title. In the HCSB, when God is using His own personal name, that’s how you will find it said.

In Isaiah 42:8 the ESV says, “I am the Lord; that is my name ...,” but the HCSB says, “I am Yahweh, that is my name ...”

It’s a subtle difference, but important.

5 The greater use of “Messiah” adds deeper meaning.

It might come as a surprise to some, but Christ isn't Jesus' last name. “Christ” comes from the Greek word “Christos,” meaning “anointed.” The Hebrew concept of the Christos translation conveys the Jewish longing for the Messiah. Because of this, the HCSB uses “Messiah” as the translation for “Christ” in Jewish context.

Look at Luke 3:15. The NIV says “The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Christ.” The HCSB translators, understanding that the verse's context regarding the Jews, translated it “Now the people were waiting expectantly, and all of them were debating in their minds whether John might be the Messiah.”

8 Greater word precision makes for a tighter translation.

The word count of the original Hebrew and Greek texts in the standard critical editions is 545,202. (How's that for a really cool fact?) The HCSB comes closer to this word count than other major translations. So why does this matter? It says that the HCSB is able to convey the original texts in a more precise fashion.

6 Words we consider synonyms have different biblical meanings.

Consider words like slave and servant. All slaves were servants, but not all servants were slaves. A slave had no rights, didn't receive any pay for work but was completely dependent on the master for everything. A servant, on the other hand, worked for a master but had rights and privileges aside from the master.

The HCSB uses “slave” instead of “servant” in order to indicate the relationship of believers to Jesus. When believers are called “slaves,” it is to show they have no rights before Christ.

“Jesus told him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’”

— *John 14:6 (HCSB)*

7 Words like “behold” and “shall” are no longer commonly used.

Words such as “behold” and “shall” don't creep into today's English too often. Most people don't speak that way, just as most people don't use “thee” and “thou.” We certainly know what they mean, but the formality they convey isn't standard for us any longer. Archaic words should never be a stumbling block for people reading the Bible.

“Shall” appears in the KJV almost 10,000 times, but it was published in 1611 when people used the word in everyday conversation.

9 The HCSB team are men and women (most not Southern Baptist, by the way) of integrity and reliability who worked with reliable source texts.

The team was comprised of 100 people representing some of the most outstanding scholars from 17 Protestant denominations. The works they used included Nestle-Aland's Novum Testamentum, 27th edition; United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament, 4th edition; and Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia, 5th edition.



MORE

Scan QR code to view a video with more details about the Bible translation. To find out more, go to HCSB.org.

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HCSB translation philosophy impacts Chinese translation

by Russ Rankin

In China, a professed atheistic nation of 1.3 billion people, Christianity is growing at a staggering pace. Missiologists estimate that there were approximately 3 million Christians in China in the early 1970s. Today, estimates place the number of believers at approximately 130 million believers – an estimate some say would increase significantly if an accurate count could be made of believers worshipping in house churches.

Yet even with the explosive growth aided by the rise of the information age, Chinese believers have lacked an accurate Bible translation in contemporary language.

Based on the framework of the HCSB translation process, LifeWay in 2006 began a collaborative project with The Asia Bible Society and GrapeCity, a multifaceted software



中文标准译本
CHINESE STANDARD BIBLE



马太福音

第 1 章

耶稣基督的家谱

1 耶稣基督——大卫的后裔、亚伯拉罕的后代——他的家谱：

从亚伯拉罕到大卫

- 2 亚伯拉罕生以撒，
以撒生雅各，
雅各生犹大和他的兄弟们，
- 3 犹大与塔玛尔生法勒斯和谢拉，
法勒斯生希斯仑，
希斯仑生亚兰，
- 4 亚兰生亚米拿达，
亚米拿达生拿顺，
拿顺生撒门，
- 5 撒门与瑞荷生波阿斯，
波阿斯与路得生俄备得，
俄备得生耶西，
- 6 耶西生大卫王。

*The beginning of
Matthew chapter 1
in CSB.*



*A mission team distributes
CSB Bibles to Chinese
tourists.*

company in Asia, to produce the Chinese Standard Bible (CSB), an accurate and readable translation of the Bible in modern Mandarin Chinese.

According to Aaron Ma, director of Bible translation projects for the Asia Bible Society, the New Testament Simplified edition was completed in 2008 and the New Testament Traditional edition will be released soon.

The number of Chinese speakers is increasing at a fast pace and the language continues to evolve rapidly. The most widely used Bible in China is the Chinese Union Version (CUV), translated more than 90 years ago by missionaries. Because the CUV was translated almost

a century ago, it uses language quite different from the common language of today, Ma explained. As a result, most Chinese find the CUV challenging to read and difficult to understand. Readers of the CUV often do not fully grasp the message, said translators serving on the CSB team.

The goal of the CSB is to provide Chinese-speaking people around the world with an accurate, readable Bible in contemporary Chinese, said Ma. In approaching the project, the philosophy of the HCSB meshed with the planners of the CSB.

“We have found the HCSB to be very accurate and literal to the original texts yet fluent, a well balanced translation,” said Ma. “The HCSB has taken the middle road in a very optimal way and is neutral in its handling of textual criticism issue

while respecting heritage.

“At the same time,” he said, “it is not overly academic nor does it follow recent trends such as gender inclusiveness. All of these principles are very consistent with those of the CSB.”

Presenting a fresh, updated version of the Bible to one of the world’s largest spiritual harvest fields still has its challenges, Ma said.

“Whenever a new translation is introduced, it is a challenge to gain acceptance,” he said. “We need to position it appropriately, while communicating the unique value of the CSB to the Chinese Christian community. The CSB

is an extension to the CUV and not a replacement of the CUV.”

The CSB “is a reliable version that can be trusted,” Ma added. “We trust that the work of His hand will speak and bring light to those that love the Word of God and trust His promises.”

Ma said the translation team hopes to complete the Old Testament sometime around the end of 2015, making the entire Bible available.

He said the translation project, which involves numerous native Chinese-speaking Greek and Hebrew scholars, includes many phases of editing and review, cross-checking and unification

checking, testing and evaluation.

“In addition, our approach and methodology is constantly reviewed and revised from a quality control standpoint,” he said. “We are determined not to compromise in any way in terms of the quality.”

“God is at work in China and in the Chinese-speaking community worldwide,” said Ma. “We pray that He will use the CSB in a powerful way to bless Chinese speakers, those who are Christians and those yet to be saved. All of this is for His glory.” ■

A clear voice of truth.

“Since only God knows the true, objective nature of things, doesn’t His book, the Bible, present the only completely objective and accurate view of the world? Our goal, then, is to see the world as much in Biblical terms as our fallen and sinful natures allow, and then we report accurately, honestly, and humbly—yet fearlessly.”

— Marvin Olasky, Editor-in-Chief

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VBS 'by the book'

always works for Pennsylvania church

by Polly House

Helping children learn who Jesus is, receive Him as their personal Savior and hide God's Word in their hearts while having a great time is the goal of Vacation Bible School. At Mason Dixon Baptist Church in New Freedom, Pa., VBS director Susan Ester takes all that fun very seriously.

"Our kids love VBS," Ester said. "In fact, our whole community loves VBS."

LifeWay offers a full line of resources for Vacation Bible School each year.

Ester and her cadre of volunteers work for weeks before VBS happens, creating decorations, getting snack ideas, learning music and motions, seeking donations

from local businesses and getting ready to welcome children with a wonderful razzle-dazzle.

This year Mason Dixon welcomed almost 200 children to their VBS; only about one-third were "church kids."

"Our VBS has a great reputation in the area," said Pastor Terry Felton. "Parents

The children at Mason Dixon Baptist Church sing their VBS theme song during Sunday morning's worship service. All photos by Kent Harville.



expect great things for their kids from the church. Their children have fun and learn about Jesus. Susan is so passionate about VBS that everyone here catches it.”

Fun and a little frantic

Laura Martin and Rick Lewis worked with the 4- and 5-year-olds. Lewis has worked with that age group for years and Martin has been with them for three years.

“These kids are so fun,” she said. “They get really excited about everything. Really excited! It’s a little like herding cats, but in a good way.”

When the children all gathered together in the sanctuary for the daily opening and closing sessions, their enthusiasm for the music and memory verse showed. The singing was loud and energetic. The memory verse – “So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the message about Jesus Christ.” Romans 10:17 (HCSB) – was learned quickly and said with determination.

“It’s really easy for the children to learn the memory verse. It’s words they know and understand,” Ester said. “Jeff [Slaughter] incorporates it into the music so not only do they get to say it, they get to sing it and that helps them memorize it.”

Family night

Ester also tries to make the family night fun for the kids and for their parents.

This year, she invited North American Mission Board missionary Andrew Mann and his dog Proof to come for family night. Mann was featured in the VBS mission portion. He heads up Graffiti 2 Ministries in New York’s South Bronx.

The mission offering donated by the children and their parents – more than \$2,000 – was given to Mann to use in his work. The children also collected dog treats and toys for Proof.

“I think Proof will have a year’s supply of dog treats,” Ester said.

Training makes all the difference

Ester is completely sold on the idea of getting VBS training every year.

“My goodness, why wouldn’t anyone go to VBS training if they could,” she said. “First of all, most of the training is free! You get the opportunity to learn



Above: Kelly Dean, left, and Susan Ester get ready for a hamburger-hot dog relay competition between the boys and the girls.

Below: Missionary dog Proof engaged the children during the Sunday family night event.



So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the message about Jesus Christ.

— Romans 10:17 (HCSB)

Children gave more than \$2,000 to the missions offering that went to Graffiti 2 Ministries in New York. They also brought canned food to donate to the local county food bank.

from LifeWay's VBS people and your state convention VBS leaders. You get the chance to talk with VBS leaders from other churches and pick their brains about what they are doing. You can even find other churches in your area that will swap decorations with you. I just think it's crazy not to take advantage of at least some of the training opportunities!"

The hundreds of training events, many of them done at no charge, sets LifeWay's VBS apart from the rest, according to Jerry Wooley, LifeWay's VBS specialist.

"Our VBS team here at LifeWay trains state convention VBS teams; then they train associational VBS teams, who in turn, go on to train local church VBS teams," he said. "Getting the training is the key to having confidence and getting ideas for your own VBS."

Ester and her "right hand," Kelly Dean, have been to LifeWay's home office in Nashville, Tenn., for the VBS Preview training events. This year the New York Metro Baptist Association offered two VBS site visits for VBS leaders and Ester and Dean were able to go to New York and see the Big Apple first hand.

"Seeing the places we were going to be 'visiting' in VBS made it all come alive even more," Ester said. "While I



Children heard Bible stories, saw missions videos, made New York-themed crafts, enjoyed recreation and ate Big Apple Adventure snacks during VBS.

was there I was able to pick up so many free things that I worked into the decorations, like subway cards, subway maps and little souvenir items."

The whole shebang

Ester and Dean are deliberate in choosing and creating the decorations, music, crafts, stories and everything else.

"It's so important that we do VBS well," said Dean. "We want this whole week to be about the kids learning about Jesus."

Using the whole LifeWay VBS curriculum makes doing VBS easy.

"The people at LifeWay who put all this together make sure that everything works together to present the gospel to the kids in a way they can understand," Ester said.

"I know there are some people who leave out one part or another, maybe to save money or something, but they are losing an opportunity," she continued. "The music leads into the missions; the missions leads into the recreation; the recreation leads into the snack time. Every piece is important."

Upcoming training in 2012

Ester and Dean already have made plans to attend one of the VBS Preview events Jan. 27-28 in Nashville. Other previews will be Jan. 6-7 at LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center; Jan 13-14 in Fort Worth, Texas; Jan. 26-27 in Nashville; and Feb. 17-18 in Kissimmee, Fla. Go to LifeWay.com/VBS to register for the preview events. ■



MORE

Scan QR code or go to Tiny.cc/2vcb5 to watch an audio slideshow from Mason Dixon's VBS.



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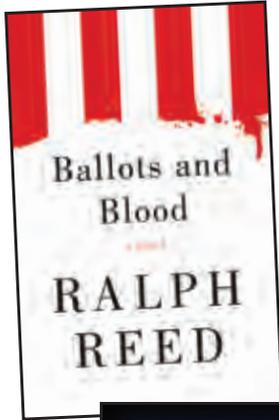
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Releases Oct. 1. Product #978-1-4336-6925-5. Paperback. \$15.99

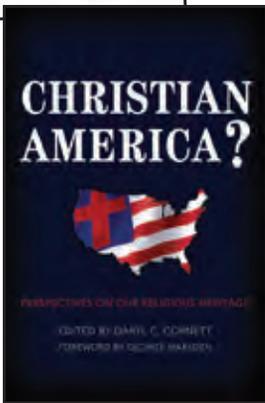


Christian America? Perspectives on Our Religious Heritage

edited by Daryl C. Cornett, foreword by George Marsden

Throughout her history America has possessed a rich religious component largely comprised of different traditions of the Christian faith. This tide of personal religious devotion connected to government observances and policies has ebbed and flowed through time, but it has always been a part of American identity – one that is full of social and political debate. As such, *Christian America?* presents a hearty point-counterpoint discussion about the nature of the relationship Christianity has had to American politics and culture throughout the country's existence, aiming to determine which of these four differing opinions is most appropriate.

Releases Nov. 1. Product #978-0-8054-4439-1. Paperback. \$14.99

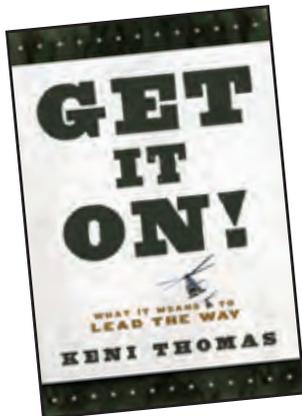


Get It On! What It Means to Lead the Way

by Keni Thomas

A decorated U.S. soldier-turned-country musician recounts experiences in the 1993 Battle of Mogadishu (*Black Hawk Down*) to express hard-won leadership lessons and an inspired view of our life's greater purpose.

Releases Oct. 1. Product #978-1-4336-7274-3. Hardcover. \$19.99



Gospel: Recovering the Power that Made Christianity Revolutionary

by J. D. Greear

Even in conservative churches, the gospel has been eclipsed by moralism and legalism. What the gospel shows us about God leads us from a life of self-involvement to one of joy, freedom, radical generosity and audacious faith. Sin is not overcome by a resolution to do better but by standing in awe of what God has done for us in Christ. God is not just after obedience. He's after a new kind of obedience – an obedience that is produced only by the gospel.

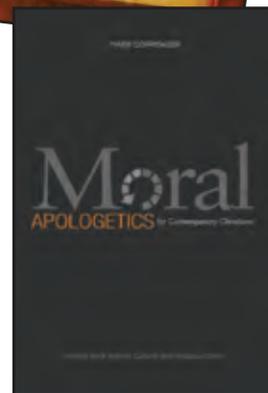
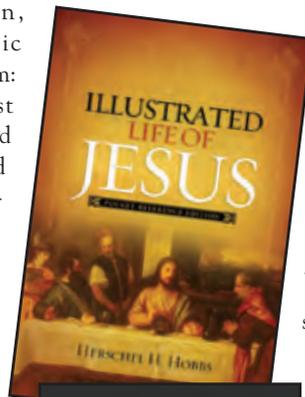
Releases Oct. 1. Product #978-1-4336-7312-2. Paperback. \$14.99



Illustrated Life of Jesus, Pocket Reference Edition

by Herschel H. Hobbs

The tranquil Sea of Galilee at sunrise, the snow-capped peaks of Mount Hermon, and the majestic temple in Jerusalem: see where Christ walked, preached and ministered in this pocket-size edition of *Illustrated Life of Jesus*. More than 250 full-color photos and graphics add clarity to significant artifacts and locations related to his teaching and time on earth. They are paired with an illuminating narrative by noted theologian Herschel H. Hobbs who retraces Christ's life



from the announcement of His birth to His glorious ascension.

Releases Nov. 1. Product #978-0-8054-9541-6. Paperback. \$9.99

KJV UltraThin Reference Bible

The KJV UltraThin Reference Bible offers the best of both worlds; it's easy to carry and easy to read. Just over

a half-inch thin, this time-honored Bible slips into a purse, briefcase or backpack. Yet, its crisp printing, nine-point type size, and unique opaque paper make it easy on the eyes – whether reading in church or during personal study. Now available in two beautiful duotone bindings (brown and tan, gray and periwinkle), this KJV Bible has a look and feel of exceptional quality but is priced affordably for gift giving.

Releases Oct. 1. Product #978-1-4336-0189-7 and #978-1-4336-0190-3. Simulated leather. \$24.99

Moral Apologetics for Contemporary Christians, Pushing Back Against Cultural and Religious Critics

by Mark Coppenger

Whether it's a best-selling author who claims "religion poisons everything" or an atheist comedian whose punch lines aren't necessarily hassled by the burden of proof, foes of the faith continue to declare Christianity morally deficient without much resistance. In *Moral Apologetics for Contemporary*

Christians, Mark Coppenger mixes compelling references – from classic philosophers to modern entertainers – to reasonably push back against both harsh critics and less intense cultural relativists, arguing that Christianity is morally superior to its competitors, as well as true.

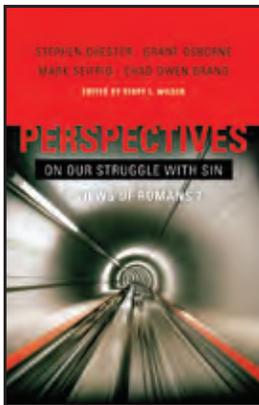
Releases Nov. 1. Product #978-0-8054-6420-7. Paperback. \$24.99

Perspectives on Our Struggle with Sin, Three Views of Romans 7

edited by Terry Wilder

This book offers a point-counterpoint discussion of Paul's words about sin in Romans 7 and whether they describe his pre-Christian or post-conversion self, or the broader idea of "the human being confronted with the Law."

Releases Oct. 1. Product #978-0-8054-4791-0. Paperback. \$24.99



Reasons for Our Hope, An Introduction to Christian Apologetics

by H. Wayne House and Dennis W. Jowers

In the light of the threats posed to Christianity by militant Islam, intolerant secularism and widespread misinformation (*The Da Vinci Code*, *The Jesus Seminar*, etc.), the necessity of informed and articulate defense of the Christian faith today can hardly be contested. *Reasons for Our Hope* offers a sophisticated yet accessible guide to "destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and ... taking every

thought captive to the obedience of Christ." (2 Cor. 10:5)

Releases Oct. 1. Product #978-0-8054-4481-0. Hardcover. \$39.99

Reading God's Story: A Chronological Daily Bible

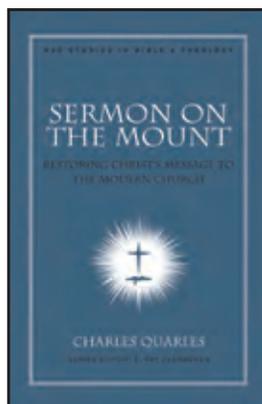
Stories are basic to life. Everybody loves a good story. We have been reading, listening to or watching stories all of our lives, so we intuitively know a lot about how they work. Yet, more and more, Christians are unfamiliar with the stories of the Bible and how the grand narrative of God's Word fits together. Indeed, God gave us the stories of the Bible to reveal great truth about Himself and about our lives. He wants to draw us into the ongoing story of what He is doing in the world. By focusing on the narrative framework of Scripture we can better understand what the Bible teaches and live out its instruction more effectively.

Releases Nov. 1. Product #978-1-4336-0111-8. Paperback. \$16.99

Sermon on the Mount, Restoring Christ's Message to the Modern Church

by Charles Quarles

Matthew 5-7, popularly known as the Sermon on the Mount, has been described as "the essence of Christianity" and inspired many commentaries. However, New Testament professor Charles



Quarles believes a fair number of those volumes either present Christ's sermon as containing an impossible spiritual ethic or instead dilute its message so much that hardly any ethical challenge remains. Also concerning, a recent Gallup poll indicated only one-third of American adults recognize Jesus as the source of this teaching that has often inspired people who do not even embrace evangelical Christianity.

Releases Nov. 1. Product #978-0-8054-4715-6. Hardcover \$24.99

Taking Christian Moral Thought Seriously, The Legitimacy of Religious Beliefs in the Marketplace of Ideas

Jeremy A. Evans, editor; Daniel Heimbach, series editor

In *Taking Christian Moral Thought Seriously* – the first book in the Christian ethics series – editor Jeremy A. Evans establishes that the separation of church and state is not a principle of the U.S. Constitution (or any other founding document). Thus, there should be a social interest in not hindering a religious person's full participation in the American marketplace of ideas. Evans invites readers from both the Christian and non-Christian communities to consider that either side's failure to take seriously one's well-prepared thoughts in science, politics and education undermines the very idea that we are seeking the truth.

Releases Oct. 1. Product #978-1-4336-7182-1. Paperback. \$24.99

The Role of Women in the Church, Second Edition

by Charles Ryrie, foreword by Dorothy Kelley Patterson

Out of print in recent years, this newly revised edition of Charles Ryrie's *The Role of Women in the Church*, featuring a new foreword by Dorothy Kelley Patterson,

proves its ongoing relevance in addressing what is still a divisive issue at the forefront of Christendom: What can a woman do in the church of God? With clarity and depth, Ryrie recounts the status of women in ancient Greece and Rome. There are Scripture-based chapters on marriage, celibacy and divorce, as well as a woman's place in church life. The book's final section examines the status of women in the church during the second and third centuries.

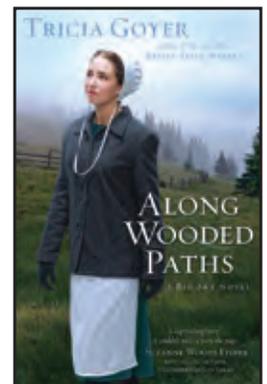
Releases Oct. 1. Product #978-1-4336-7380-1. Paperback. \$14.99

Along Wooded Paths, a Big Sky novel

by Tricia Goyer

Although proud of living apart from the world, Marianna Sommer's newly relocated Amish family is discovering that life in the mountains of Montana requires working together with the Englisch. Marianna's heart is torn between the Amish man from Indiana whom she has long planned on marrying and the friendly Englisher who models a close walk with God. Who should have young Marianna's heart? What is God asking of her through ongoing family struggles and this romantic and spiritual tension? The answer is found along the wooded paths.

Releases Oct. 1. Product #978-1-4336-6869-2. Paperback. \$14.99



NEW RESOURCES

Order online at LifeWay.com or call (800) 458-2772



Race Against Time

by Kimberley and Kayla Woodhouse

A teenage girl in Alaska witnesses a murder with FBI and top-secret military information connections that winds its way back to the racing dog kennel she runs with her mother.

Releases Nov. 1. Product #978-1-4336-7117-3. Paperback. \$14.99



The River Queen, a Water Wheel novel

by Gilbert Morris

Beloved historical romance novelist Gilbert Morris discovers inspiration aboard an 1850 riverboat where a prideful woman and a drunkard captain seek restoration and find it, by God's grace, in each other. *The River Queen* takes readers back to a time and place popularized in classic works by Mark Twain (*Life on the Mississippi*) and Margaret Mitchell (*Gone with the Wind*).

Releases Nov. 15. Product #978-1-4336-7320-7. Paperback. \$14.99

HCSB RESOURCES

HCSB Large Print Compact Bible

The HCSB Large Print Compact Bible displays one of today's most sought after presentations of Scripture, striking a perfect balance between portability, readability (8 point type size) and economy. It's a portable, affordable and easy-to-read Bible, complete with gift box and reading helps, now available in simulated leather dark brown or burgundy cross design and black/gray or chocolate/pink duotone editions.

Releases Oct. 1. Product: #978-1-4336-0191-0, #978-1-4336-0192-7, 978-1-4336-0193-4, and 978-1-4336-0194-1. Simulated leather. \$19.99

HCSB Study Bible

Developed in direct response to what consumer focus groups asked for, only one study Bible

delivers more than you'd expect – right where you'd expect it. When reading a passage in the Bible, you shouldn't have to wonder where to find supporting reference notes and commentary that go along with it. That's why the HCSB Study Bible – featuring approximately 15,000 study notes – is designed so that every clarifying resource is there on the same page spread as the biblical text to which it refers. You'll never again forget what you were looking for, because the pertinent note, map, chart, word study or illustration is already there. When an even deeper view is desired, there are also introductions for each book, outlines, timelines, a topical concordance and more.

Releases Oct. 1. Product #978-1-5864-0553-3. Simulated leather. \$69.99

Holman QuickSource Guide to Understanding the Bible

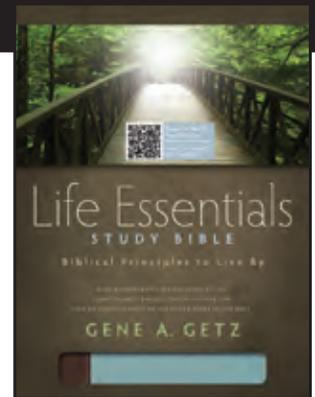
by Kendell Easley

The Holman QuickSource Guide to Understanding the Bible is your guide to deeper Bible study. If you've been wanting to get a better handle on the Bible – even if you've been reading it for years – this helpful reference book pulls the sweeping story, the timeline, the key terms and much more into a clear, concise, yet surprisingly comprehensive summary of biblical information.

Releases Oct. 1. Product #978-0-8054-9550-8. Paperback. \$14.99

Life Essentials Study Bible

"So what?" That's the response many people have to the Bible. Read a passage, interpret it and still they ask, "So, what difference



does that make in my life?" In the Life Essentials Study Bible, renowned Bible teacher Gene Getz complements the full text of the popular HCSB translation by elaborating on 1,500 principles in Scripture that are as relevant today as when the 66 books of the Bible were written. Distilling these truths into principles, Getz helps the reader more easily remember and effectively apply the Bible's wisdom to everyday life.

Releases Oct. 1. Hardback. Product #78-1-5864-0045-3 \$44.99; Hardback. Indexed (IDX) Product #978-1-5864-0033-0. \$54.99; Brown duotone simulated leather. Product #978-1-5864-0042-2. \$59.99; Brown duotone simulated leather. (IDX) Product #978-1-5864-0043-9. \$69.99; Brown/Green duotone simulated leather. Product #978-1-5864-0044-6. \$59.99; Brown/Green duotone simulated leather. (IDX) Product #978-1-5864-0036-1. \$69.99; Brown/Blue duotone simulated leather. Product #978-1-4336-0220-7. \$59.99; Brown/Blue duotone simulated leather. (IDX) Product #978-1-4336-0221-4. \$69.99

CHURCH RESOURCES

Living the Life 1: God's Standard for Christian Living

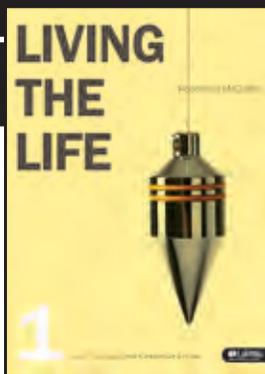
by Robertson McQuilkin

This study explores God's purpose in establishing his law and examines the Ten Commandments and their application to the Christian life today. It presents God's expectations for the Christian life as expressed in the Old Testament law. This study helps believers assess their obedience



to God's standard and align their lives with His will. 6 sessions.

Releases in September. Product #0-0537-1577, \$9.95



week's readings. It also pulls readers deeper into the biblical story to realize that it really is their story and has implications for their lives today.

Releases in September. Product #0-0541-4497, \$9.95

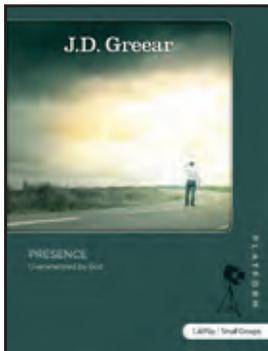
Presence: Overwhelmed by God

by J.D. Greear

This small-group study, the fifth in the Platform series, will explore the facets of God's presence

in our lives. Using Exodus 32–34 as a scriptural context, J.D. Greear takes illustrations from Moses' interaction with the Lord and drives home the realities of God's presence and power. God reveals to Moses all the ways He is going to bless Israel. But it is God's presence that Moses most desires. During the course of this study, small groups will have the opportunity to determine if what they long for is God's blessing or His presence. 6 sessions.

Releases in September. Study guide, Product #0-0537-1605, \$7.95; DVD leader kit, Product #0-0537-1604, \$24.95



Small Group Life 7: Connections: Wired for Community

by Steve Gladen

We are wired for connections at varying levels and layers of life, and the enemy tirelessly works to separate us, create divisions and drive us to isolation. Episode 7 of *Small Group Life* guides us on a journey into the connections of our lives – the healthiest expressions, how God created them for good, and how the enemy works to destroy them. 6 to 12 sessions.

Releases in September. Product #0-0525-6974, \$5.95

Subversive Kingdom: Lessons in Rebellion from the Parables of Jesus

by Ed Stetzer

Throughout all time, God has been establishing His Kingdom on earth. The Kingdom of God is advancing even now, and yet much confusion remains regarding it. This Bible study, taken from the parables of Jesus regarding

the Kingdom, will help churches and individuals understand Kingdom dynamics and how they can be involved in furthering God's Kingdom in the world. It leads individuals and churches to understand the nature of the Kingdom of God and

how it leads the church to be a counter culture. 6 sessions.

Releases in October. Member book, Product #0-0537-1682, \$9.95; DVD leader kit, Product #0-0537-1681, \$69.95

Raising Boys and Girls: The Art of Understanding Their Differences

by Sissy Goff, David Thomas and Melissa Trevathan

Parents, grandparents, church volunteers and other caregivers of children from preschool to high school can learn to better connect with their kids. As adults understand the differences in girls and boys, they can learn to use tools that will help them communicate, understand and connect with kids of all ages. This study also will help Christian parents and caregivers recognize that being a positive adult example for their boys and girls is one of the most important jobs they have. 6 sessions.

Releases in October. Member book, Product #0-0537-1583, \$9.95; DVD leader kit, Product #0-0532-4579, \$79.95

FLYTE: faith. life. together. Volume 2

FLYTE is a brand-new curriculum for preteens that speaks to what they are dealing with right now – not what's past or in their future. Preteen experts – namely preteens themselves – weighed in on the energy, movement and excitement of FLYTE during its development so that key biblical concepts are not only grasped, but applied to issues like eating disorders, puberty,

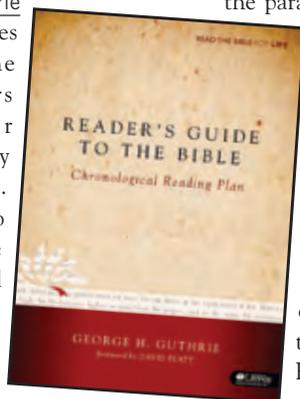
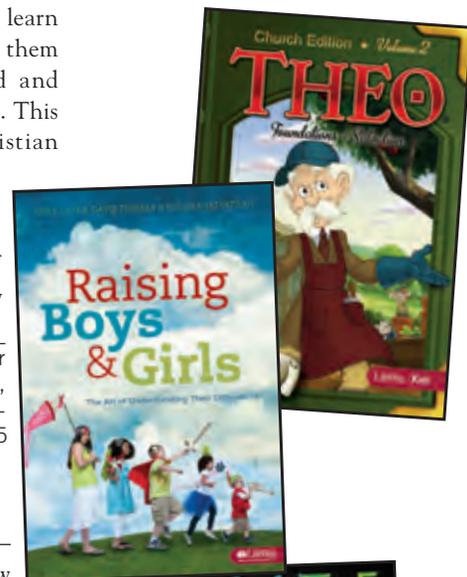
sex, bullying, emotions, family relationships and more. Two-year scope and sequence.

Releases in September. Learner magazine, Product #0-0539-9883, \$4.95; Leader guide, Product #0-0539-9875, \$9.95; Leader kit, Product #0-0539-7451, \$89.95

Theo Church Edition: Foundations of Salvation

Join Theo and his mischievous little friends as they explore theological lessons like faith, redemption, adoption and the plan of salvation. Each entertaining, animated episode corresponds with a printable teaching plan that digs deep into God's Word. Theo works well for small group times and makes teaching theology easy and fun. 4 sessions, plus a bonus session.

Releases in September. Product #0-0539-7447, \$39.99



NEW RESOURCES

Order online at www.lifeway.com or call (800) 458-2772



VBS 2012: Amazing Wonders Aviation Sampler and Super Sampler

Planning VBS is easier than ever with the VBS 2012: Amazing Wonders Aviation Sampler and Super Sampler. Order the sampler and you'll have one leader and learner guide for each age group from babies through preteens. Plus, it's packed with planning resources, promotional helps, music and more to help you successfully plan your VBS. The Super Sampler includes

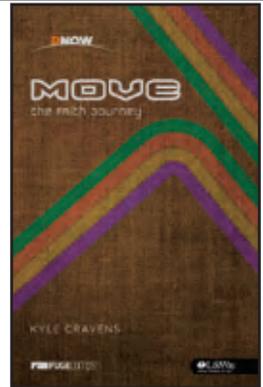
everything in the sampler plus much more.

Releases in December. VBS 2012 Sampler, Product #0-0540-4196, \$69.99; VBS 2012 Super Sampler, Product #0-0540-4197, \$199.99

Club VBS 2012: SpaceQuest Starter Kit

This kit is jam-packed with all the samples you need to assess the needs of your church and plan a Vacation Bible School of your own. It contains one leader and learner guide for babies through 6th grade. Simply order curriculum and other supplies for each class separately. Club VBS is designed for a two-hour schedule for five days or a one-hour schedule for ten days and includes Bible study, crafts, and recreation/snack rotations. This anytime VBS option is flexible and easy to use.

Releases in December. Product #0-0540-9725, \$99.99



MOVE: The Faith Journey

Move into the Old Testament book of Exodus and learn from the faith journey of Moses. Discover how faith requires trust, perseverance, courage, obedience and action. Students in grades 7-12 will learn how they must be open to God's moving and be willing to take a risk. Along the way they may even have their own "burning bush" or "Red Sea" experience. This study promotes meaningful small group interaction but is also designed for

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in-depth individual Bible study. 5 sessions.

Releases in August. Student book, Product #0-0538-9868, \$6.95; Leader guide, Product #0-0538-9867, \$12.95



Fuel Foundations for Middle School, Volume 2

This video-driven Bible study for middle school students lays a foundation for encountering God in His Word through the great stories of the Bible, told in chronological order.

All teacher preparation resources and student handouts are included on the CD-ROMs. Teaching plans are targeted for middle school students with bonus plans suitable for grades 7-12. Daily devotional thoughts and a monthly parent newsletter are provided. 12 sessions.

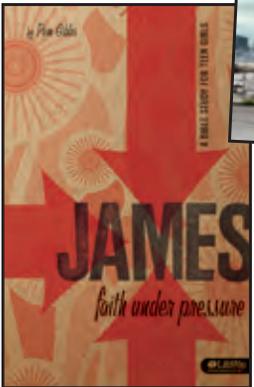
Releases in September. Small group leader edition (CD-ROM), Product #0-0540-8230, \$9.95; DVD & CD-ROM leader set, Product #0-0538-7856, \$159.95

James: Faith Under Pressure

by Pam Gibbs

Trials. Temptation. Favoritism. Peace. Authenticity. For teenage girls, their faith collides with everyday life, and they often wonder how to remain a faithful follower of Jesus in the midst of the pressure they face regularly. This study helps teen girls learn that they can survive – even thrive – when faith meets real life. 8 sessions.

Releases in November. Product #0-0538-7851, \$10.95



James: Mercy Triumphs

by Beth Moore

James, Jesus' own brother, started out as a skeptic. See how one glimpse of the resurrected Savior

turned an unbeliever into a disciple with Beth Moore's study *James: Mercy Triumphs*. James is a book with many topics – social justice, joy, hardship, faith, reversal of fortunes for rich and poor, wisdom, gifts from above, single-mindedness, the dangers of the tongue, humility and prayer – all of which are covered in this study. 8 video sessions with 7 weeks of print study.

Releases in November. Member book, Product #0-0545-9784, \$14.95; Leader guide, Product #0-0545-9785, \$6.95; DVD leader kit (contains DVDs, member book, and leader guide), Product #0-0537-1580, \$199.95; Audio CDs, Product #0-0545-9786, \$39.95

5 Conversations You Must Have with Your Son: The Bible Study

by Vicki Courtney

Millions of boys grow older, but very few become great, godly men. With so many influences from culture, friends and celebrities, how can you be sure which category your son will fall into? Prepare to talk to your son about the tough topics with Vicki Courtney's *5 Conversations You*



Must Have with Your Son: The Bible Study. This study will help sons build foundations of faith that will equip them throughout their lives. 6 sessions.

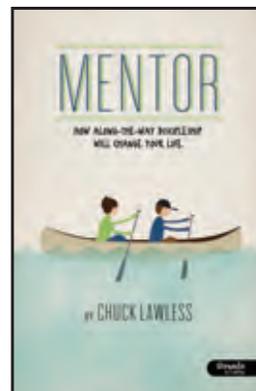
Releases in August. Member book, Product #0-0534-2724, \$11.95; DVD leader kit (contains DVDs and member book with leader helps), Product #0-0534-2723, \$149.95

Mentor: How Along-the-Way Discipleship will Change Your Life

by Chuck Lawless

A common misunderstanding in the 1st century world was that “the disciple walks in the dust of the master.” This new study teaches young adults that the Bible offers numerous examples of “masters” in whose dust their students walked (12 disciples) and the best way to learn to walk with God is to walk in the dust of a Master who Himself walks with God. 6 sessions.

Releases in August. Member book, Product #0-0537-8213, \$9.95; DVD leader kit, Product #0-0537-8214, \$49.95



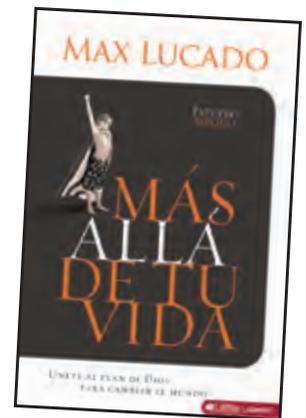
SPANISH RESOURCES

Más allá de tu vida (Outlive Your Life, Spanish edition)

by Max Lucado

This study encourages you to change the world around you by getting on your knees, rolling up your sleeves and performing works God has created you to do. This inspiring call will prompt you to spread God's love as you learn more about ministering to your neighbors. Leader guide included. 6 sessions.

Releases in August. Product #0-0537-1576, \$13.95



Colección Temas de Fe (Themes of Faith Collection)

B&H Publishing Group has licensed two more easy-to-use and share best-selling booklets from Rose Publishing, translating them into Spanish. Each 14-page, full-color booklet is richly illustrated, carries a self-explanatory title regarding the content and serves as an always-ready reference tool for personal use or on the mission field. Forty-two other booklets are already available.

Releases Oct. 1. Product #978-0-8054-9569-0 and #978-0-8054-9569-0. Booklet. \$3.99

The Exchange

Ed Stetzer, LifeWay's vice president of research & ministry development

Bible reading leads to spiritual growth

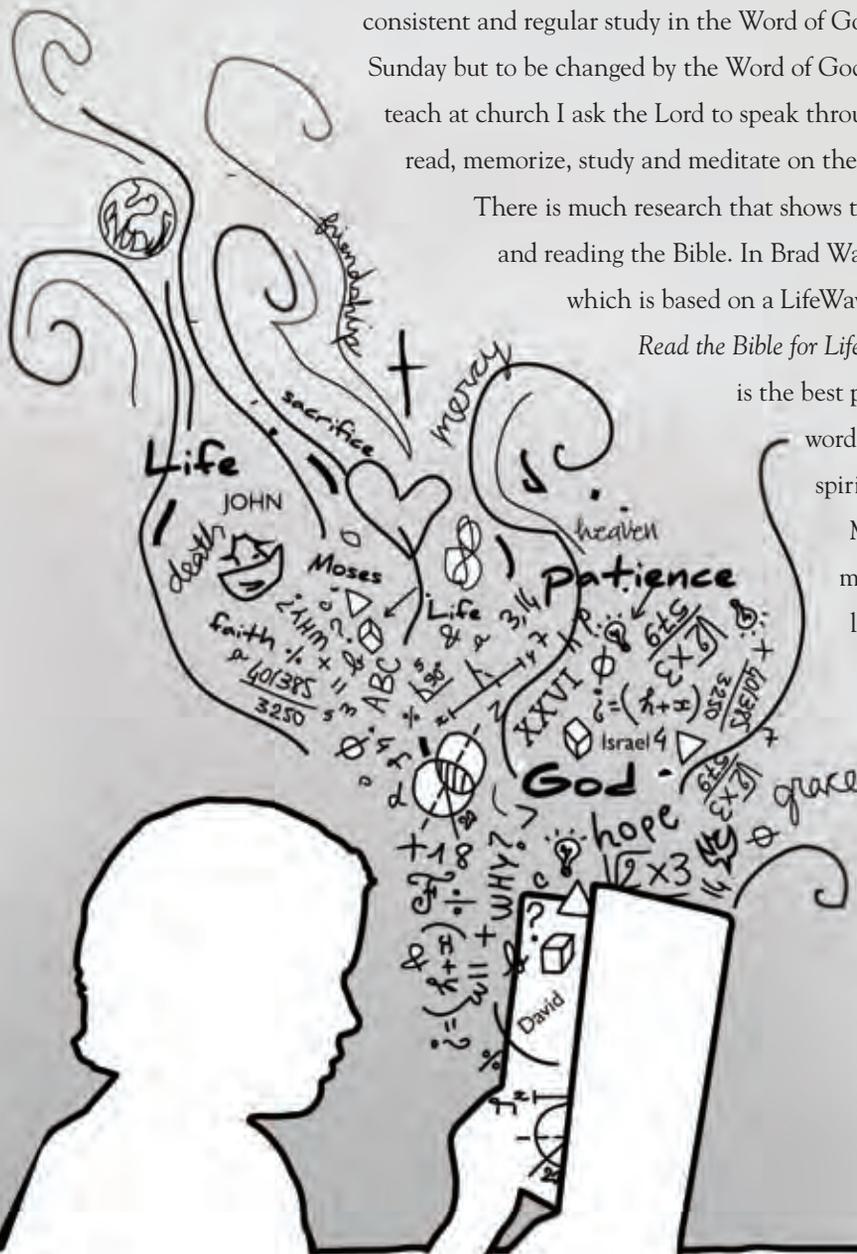
I am a student and teacher of God's Word. I went to school – a lot of school – committed to studying things rooted in the Scriptures. I write books and articles; I lecture, preach and speak at conferences all around the world on the centrality of God's mission expressed in Bible.

For me, reading the Bible is essential to my spiritual growth. I make a habit of consistent and regular study in the Word of God – not just for messages I preach on Sunday but to be changed by the Word of God. Every time I open the Word of God and teach at church I ask the Lord to speak through it. As believers, it is essential that we read, memorize, study and meditate on the Word of God.

There is much research that shows the correlation between spiritual maturity and reading the Bible. In Brad Waggoner's book *The Shape of Faith to Come*, which is based on a LifeWay Research study, and in George Guthrie's *Read the Bible for Life* material, we see that reading the Bible

is the best predictor of spiritual maturity. In other words, if you are in the Bible, you are growing spiritually.

Many people are realizing that we aren't making as many disciples as we would like. Studies done by LifeWay Research show a lack of discipleship among many evangelical Christians. So we need to ask what's the answer to that? Issues such as preaching, missional living and "doing life" in a covenant community are all part of the solution. But I think there's no question that an essential element is leading God's people to consistently engage God's Word through reading, studying and memorization. Biblical illiteracy is prevalent and personal commitment to





God's Word is the only real answer.

It is critical for church leadership to challenge believers to be in the Word of God, consistently growing in their knowledge of the Scriptures. One way to do that is to teach and encourage study of the Scriptures in the context of the grand narrative of redemption. I try to read the Bible in the way it unfolds. The Bible is not a series of isolated morality tales. Instead, by looking at it as a whole through a Christ-centered lens, I read the Scriptures with the whole story of redemption in mind.

I regularly hear of people who would rather read devotional books than read the Bible. Certainly, when wading through Leviticus, the chapter on identifying and treating skin diseases doesn't exactly bring great joy and warmth to the heart. But we need to remember that even that passage plays a part in the unfolding plan of redemption.

All parts of the Bible are equally inspired, but not all are "equally applied to my life in this very moment." I recognize my view can be easily misunderstood, but I think that I probably need to spend more time praying on and thinking through Philippians chapter 2 than I do Leviticus chapter 13, the skin disease chapter. So, I think what we have to do is remember why

they're both there.

With that being said, one of the things I do is make it a habit to read through the Bible once a year. If I simply read the parts I think I need the most, I will miss a big part of God's design for my growth. Even though my tendency, like a lot of Christians, is to only read the New Testament, I need to spend time in the Old Testament as well. It is essential for all believers to get the full picture of God's revelation.

Churches today face some big challenges. One of the greatest is the evangelical angst occurring in North America. Evangelicals in our country are just not sure of who they are or where they're going.

Perhaps what evangelicals need most right now is a strategy for biblical literacy. We need to reengage the biblical narrative and immerse ourselves in consistent (or daily, if that's your thing) study. It will help us be more gracious and winsome in the way we communicate. It will help us have a clearer view on controversial issues. It will help us to understand and communicate a clear gospel as laid out in the Scriptures – a gospel of the cross and of the Kingdom. The Word of God is essential to where we are right now. ■

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