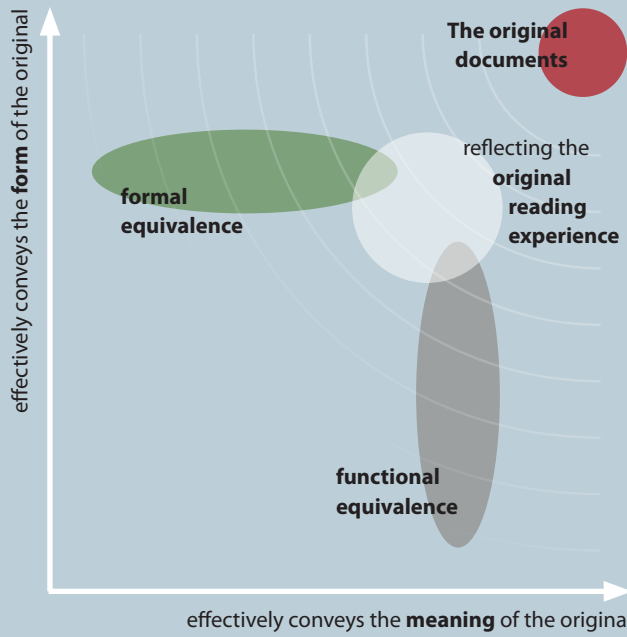


BIBLE TRANSLATION CHART

CHOOSING A BIBLE TRANSLATION



When the documents that make up the Bible were first written, they captured exactly what God wanted to say in the languages that ordinary people spoke. There was no friction between perceiving the **form** or structure of the text and perceiving the **meaning** of the text. The original audience experienced a unique combination of both ingredients—represented by the red dot in the top right corner of the diagram.

But Bible readers today can't experience this combination any more. The Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic texts still show us the form and structure of the original but most of us can't understand what they mean. As English speakers, we need translations, and we're privileged to have access to a wide variety of options that fall into three broad groups.

Tending to the upper left corner of the diagram, the first group—represented by the green oval and known to scholars as formal equivalence translations—places a particularly high priority on reproducing the form and structure of the original. This approach allows modern Bible readers to perceive many of the important details and subtleties in the text. Ease of understanding varies from verse to verse and from book to book, but all verses and all books achieve a high standard of transparency to the original languages.

Tending to the lower right corner of the diagram, the second group—represented by the brown oval and known to scholars as functional or 'dynamic' equivalence translations—place a particularly high priority on reproducing the meaning of the original. This approach helps modern Bible readers understand the impact and implications of God's message in words that they can relate to and grasp quickly. Transparency to the form and structure of the original documents varies from verse to verse and from book to book, but all verses and all books achieve ease of understanding.

Tending to the upper right corner of the diagram, a third group of translations—represented by the white circle—seeks to recover the priorities of the original documents themselves, allowing readers to perceive the **form** of the original and the **meaning** of the original at the same time. Striving for the optimum blend of authenticity and accessibility in every verse, these translations allow modern-day readers to experience—as far as possible—what it would have felt like to be part of the Bible's original audience.

TRANSLATION	TRANSLATION PHILOSOPHY	1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-5	DISTINCTIVES
NIV NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION	Recreating—as closely as possible—the reading experience of the original audience	“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.”	Created directly from the best-attested manuscripts, the NIV is the world's bestselling modern-English Bible translation. It seeks to provide the optimum combination of transparency to the form and structure of the original documents and comprehensibility of the original meaning in every verse.
NAB New American Bible	Seeking to combine transparency to the source documents with a good level of comprehensibility in modern English	“Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, (love) is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury,”	Published under the direction of Pope Pius XII, this Catholic version of the Bible represents more than 25 years of effort by the Catholic Biblical Association of America. All editions include the Deuterocanonical/Apocryphal books.
HCSB Holman Christian Standard Bible	Blending transparency to the original documents with accessibility for the contemporary audience	“Love is patient; love is kind. Love does not envy; is not boastful; is not conceited; does not act improperly; is not selfish, is not provoked; does not keep a record of wrongs;”	Produced under the sponsorship of the Southern Baptist Convention, the HCSB seeks to combine transparency to the original documents with comprehensibility in modern English.
NASB New American Standard Bible	An uncompromising effort to maximize transparency to the original documents	“Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered;”	An update of the American Standard Version, which was published in 1901. The NASB seeks the highest possible level of transparency to the original documents that can be achieved while still retaining comprehensibility in English.
KJV King James Version	Blending transparency to the form and structure of the Bible documents that were available at the time with elegant 17 th -century English	“Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;”	A landmark in the history of English Literature. Published in 1611, the translation's purpose was “to deliver God's book unto God's people in a tongue which they can understand.”
NKJV New King James Version	Prioritizing transparency to the same source documents as the original KJV but with updated English	“Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil;”	A modern update of the King James Version. The purpose was to refresh and modernize the original KJV without losing its distinctive flavor.
NRSV New Revised Standard Version	Maintaining the formal equivalence philosophy of the RSV while seeking to reflect contemporary English usage	“Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;”	An ecumenical revision of the Revised Standard Version (1951) with a new focus on ease of understanding.
ESV English Standard Version	Building on the foundation of the RSV, prioritizing transparency to the original documents	“Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful”	An Evangelical update of the Revised Standard Version (1951). The ESV prioritizes transparency to the form and structure of the original documents.
NIRV NEW INTERNATIONAL READER'S VERSION	Working from the NIV as a base to maximize accessibility for younger readers	“Love is patient. Love is kind. It does not want what belongs to others. It does not brag. It is not proud. It is not rude. It does not look out for its own interests. It does not easily become angry. It does not keep track of other people's wrongs.”	A thorough, scholarly simplification of the NIV, the NIRV was specifically designed to help young children and new readers understand the Bible for themselves and create an easy stepping-stone from a children's Bible to an adult Bible.
NLT New Living Translation	Balancing accuracy and clarity to convey the original meaning of the text	“Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged.”	Translated by a team of evangelical Bible scholars and stylists to convey the modern English equivalent of the meaning of each phrase of Scripture. The result is a faithful, understandable rendering of the original Biblical texts.
CEV Contemporary English Version	Prioritizing accessibility for a broad audience	“Love is kind and patient, never jealous, boastful, proud, or rude. Love isn't selfish or quick tempered. It doesn't keep a record of wrongs that others do.”	Written at an elementary-school reading level, the CEV is readable and understandable for the modern reader. It features a large number of footnotes that explain cultural and technical terms.
NCV New Century Version	Prioritizing accessibility for a broad audience	“Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous, it does not brag, and it is not proud. Love is not rude, is not selfish, and does not get upset with others. Love does not count up wrongs that have been done.”	Based on the ICB (International Children's Bible), the NCV is a simple, readable translation that places the priority on communicating the original meaning of the text.
The Message A Paraphrase	A contemporary rendering of the message of the Bible in everyday idioms	“Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, doesn't have a swelled head, doesn't force itself on others, isn't always 'me first,' doesn't fly off the handle, doesn't keep score of the sins of others,”	The Message uses informal modern English to help contemporary Bible readers feel the vitality and directness with which God's word originally communicated.
AMP Amplified Bible	A broadly formal equivalent translation with explanatory alternate readings and amplifications	“It is not conceited (arrogant and inflated with pride); it is not rude (unmannerly) and does not act unbecomingly. Love (God's love in us) does not insist on its own rights or its own way, for it is not self-seeking; it is not touchy or fretful or resentful; it takes no account of the evil done to it [it pays no attention to a suffered wrong].”	A popular resource that was created to add color to the Bible reading experience through explanatory alternate readings and amplifications.