

Worship services are being cancelled until further notice because of Covid-19. However, we will have worship services through the Internet Zoom platform every Sunday at 10:30 AM. The Zoom link for this service will be sent to you by email. The phone number for Zoom always remains the same but the Meeting ID and password number changes every week. If you need more information, please contact Mr. Vautour. See the bottom of the bulletin the contact information.

If you have friends or acquaintances who want to join in the worship service, please do not hesitate to share with them the Zoom links to join with us in the worship our great God.

The National GCI services will be at 1:00 p.m. each Sunday. The Zoom link sent to you yesterday by email will remain the same until further notice.

For more information about special activities happening in GCI, please see the international website at [www.gci.org](http://www.gci.org). On the left-hand upper side of the screen, you will see 3 short lines. You simply need to click on it. A drop down menu will appear. Click on "**PARTICIPATE**".

**Please note that audio sermons are available and a PDF copy of sermons are available at [www.worshiphim.ca](http://www.worshiphim.ca) and video sermons are now available on YouTube – GRACE COMMUNION INTERNATIONAL-MONCTON (see link below)**

If you have a prayer requests, other events you would like to announce and/or praise to our great God you would like to share, **please try to contact Mr. Vautour by email, text or telephone no later than Saturday, in the morning.**

**Prayer request for Ravi Zacharias of RZIM ministry.** (Letter sent to Winston Jones, deacon – GCI Moncton, from the president RZIM dated May 14, 2020. His daughter Naomi says the following: "His oncologist informed us that this cancer is very rare in its aggression and that no options for further treatment remain. Medically speaking, they have done all they are able," she added. (from <https://www.christianpost.com/>)

*Dear Winston,*

*Yesterday, Anne and I had some precious moments with the Zacharias family. Amongst a few other things that Ravi-ji shared with us personally, he wanted to send on to you his deepest love and sincerest thanks. Although he can only speak in a whisper, his passion for Jesus Christ, for the Gospel, and for the heart and vision of our team is unwavering. If anything, there were moments when you could only say that his passion burns even brighter. His message to us in many ways was very straightforward: Keep following Christ and keep preaching the Gospel. This we will keep on doing, it is the reason why RZIM exists.*

*Only our Lord knows how much time Ravi-ji has, but it appears the time for him to be with the Lord he loved to serve is drawing near. We continue to seek strength in the Lord in these days. As Lamentations says, "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."*

*Michael Ramsden, RZIM President*

**How the first disciples of Jesus responded to the apostles' teaching:**

1- "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship,

3- to the breaking of bread  
4- and the prayers." (Ac 2:42 ESV)

**Offerings:** you can send your offering directly to the following address: **Grace Communion International- Canada, Suite 203A, 2121 Airport Dr., Saskatoon, SK 7S1 6W5.** If you prefer, you can also call **1-306-653-2705.** Thank you for your continued generous giving to God by giving to this part of God's church, his body.

**From Mr. Bill Hall – GCI Canadian Director** *"Our office here in Saskatoon will remain open during regular business hours. I'm self isolating for a couple of weeks, but Kathleen will be available. We will continue to process the donations we receive in Saskatoon. Members are urged to mail them directly to our office for the time-being. They can also donate via phone using a credit card, or via Canada Helps using the donate button on our website [www.gcicanada.ca](http://www.gcicanada.ca) We are waving the provision that all donations given via Canada Helps go toward national expenses for the time being. We will credit all donations received via Canada Helps to a member's local congregation, if we can identify where they attend."*

---

#### **Update from Mr. Bill Hall, GCI Canadian Dir. dated May 16, 2020**

Here are our GCI Canada guidelines/policy for resuming regular worship services:

- Services can only resume once the provincial authority allows such meetings to go forward.
- All the guidelines from the provincial authority must be strictly followed.
- After notice to reopen is given by the appropriate provincial authority, you need to wait an additional 4 weeks, before an actual gathering happens.
- The congregation must be consulted as to whether or not they are comfortable resuming services.
- Special consideration needs to be made for those of the most vulnerable group.
- ***Any reopening of services, small groups, etc. and the plans involved need to be first approved by your RD before they can resume. Any questions about communion, should be directed to your RD.***



Mr. and Mrs.  
Greg Williams

---

#### **Discerning God's Best (dated May 13, 2020)**

Dear GCI Family and Friends,

As President of Grace Communion International, one of my responsibilities is to cast a denominational vision for 542 churches and 230 fellowship groups in 69 countries, worldwide. For almost two years you have been hearing and reading my proclamations for GCI to become a healthier church; more vibrantly representing Jesus to the people we interact with in the neighborhoods where we are present.

In the first part of his letter to believers in Philippi, the apostle Paul offers this short prayer:

***And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God. (Philippians 1:9-11)***

Bible commentator Ralph Martin says, **"The fulfillment of the apostle's prayer will be that his friends have the ability to discern, and then to practice in their Christian living, the really important issues in their corporate life as a believing community."** Read that statement again and let it sink in.

Brothers and sisters, this is where we find ourselves, in a long season of discernment coupled with learning new ministry practices and trying new approaches.

Discernment is defined as sound judgment which makes possible the distinguishing of good from evil, and the recognition of God's right ways for his people. It is putting on and exercising the mind of Christ so that we join him in his ongoing ministry to humanity. Discernment allows us to understand spiritual realities on practical levels and helps us guard against pitfalls.

I'm encouraged as we continue in the Spirit's stream of grace and renewal, and I credit the Spirit with helping us discern and define the ministry of Jesus through the lenses of faith, hope and love. The construct of our pastors serving as under-shepherds to the Great Shepherd, and then—through the guidance of the Spirit—having ministry leaders and teams actively expressing the faith, hope and love of Jesus is not only appropriate but is practical and applicable. This healthy church construct provides a solid foundation to allow our congregations to continually discern God's best for them and to participate in the building of God's eternal kingdom.

In my travels around the world, I see and experience the love of Jesus in all GCI churches I visit. Our churches are made up of dear, sweet, godly people. I rejoice over this, and yet I also feel the sentiment of Paul when he expresses his desire for the growth of depth of relationship to Jesus and the adjoining thought of discernment to determine what is God's best for them as they endeavor to bring glory and praise to the Triune God. Determining "God's best" is an ongoing dynamic process through lots of prayers, conversation, and willingness to explore new ideas and new practices. If we are to be a vibrant church we cannot do "business as usual" we must build out the faith, hope, and love avenues and open lanes for the members to participate as the priesthood of all believers. Operating as an online church through the COVID-19

pandemic forced us to be creative and innovative, and when we can come together in public meetings again, we should continue to operate out of a fresh, creative spirit.

I believe Paul's prayer established clarity of vision for the church in Philippi and is a good place for us to consider where we are in Grace Communion International today. Growing deeper in grace and knowledge of Jesus and then allowing this to overflow as we participate with Jesus as he moves in the lives of the people around us is what leads to impacting the mission field God has given to each congregation. Our vibrant relationship with Jesus stimulates our discernment to determine what God's best is for us as we minister to the world around us. Operating in this manner sounds like Healthy Church to me.

Praying for God's Best for You!

Greg Williams

---

### Is there a Best Version of the Bible? by Gary Deddo

What is the best version of the Bible to use? That question is asked often, and it is a good one. First, we have available in English an astonishing range of options to choose from—and growing. Second, there are different ways of translating and also specific aims of particular translations. Even if all were equally helpful in some way, no one could consult even most of them.

The topic is large and there are whole books on the subject. So, we'll have to narrow our concern to one particular but important question. What is the difference between a Bible version that is a translation compared to one that is a paraphrase? And the follow up question: Which of these two kinds of Bibles is the best to use?

A translation is a version of the Bible that works directly from the most reliable texts we have available in the original Greek and (mostly) Hebrew languages of the New Testament and Old Testament (or Hebrew Bible). They are done by scholars who have spent years immersed in those ancient languages. Such translations often take years to complete.

Most standard translations, that is, widely known, trusted and used translations, have been produced by groups of such scholars who share a concern for accurate translation of the Bible but who represent a spectrum of denominational or theological backgrounds or positions. The reason for creating a consortium of scholars is to combine expertise and also to guard against individual theological bias and personal blind-spots that would affect the accuracy of translation if not brought into conversation with others.

Their aim as translators is to represent as accurately as possible what the original texts communicated to the original audience—but in a way that also communicates that message to us—without losing a lot in the translation or losing contemporary readers of the translation. That, of course, is why the original language texts are being translated into another language such as English.

There is not just one single way to go about the process of translation, but a range on a continuum. This has been described as ranging on one end of the spectrum from the closest word-for-word translation to, on the other end, a "biblical idea for contemporary idea" translation. Recognition of this continuum is regarded by most translators as a pay-off scheme. You can't do full justice to both concerns equally at the same time. So most translations end up with a combination of the two approaches in some kind of proportion, leaning towards one end of the continuum or the other, with some being 50/50. Most of the translations we have, then, fall somewhere in the midsection of the continuum, tipping more or less towards the word-for-word side or leaning more towards the idea-for-idea approach.

#### **Word for Word <-----a-----b-----c-----d-----> Idea for Idea**

You might think that the word for word approach would be best or safest. But since languages work differently (different word orders or syntax) and since often a word in one language doesn't have an exact equal in the other (having a different semantic range) and since cultural background and context also are involved in the meanings of words, an exact word-for-word translation can be very hard to understand and very wooden and stilted. The English can be very strained and no real exact word be found, so an approximation is selected. All words have more than one lexical meaning, so some judgment has to be involved in selecting a particular English word.

So most translations are not at the extreme end of the word-for-word approach. However, most translations are not at the other extreme end of the spectrum either. Why not? The problem with idea corresponding to idea, is there may not be an exact equivalent *of ideas* between the biblical ideas and our contemporary ideas. Additionally, ideas can allow for a wide range of understanding and so can be ambiguous. Also, the selection of ideas used to translate can be too influenced by our current cultural context, which could be at odds with the biblical meaning and ideas. So, again, most translations fall somewhere along the two-thirds middle between the two strict approaches.

**Now what about paraphrases?** These are renderings of the biblical text that are not necessarily based on the texts of the original languages. A strict paraphrase is based on other English translations, or on a number of them. But they can be based on the original languages. Their primary aim is to communicate and connect with a contemporary reader or even a particular subgroup (e.g. students, women, etc.) of our current social/cultural context. So, a paraphrase

then ends up being much closer to the “idea for idea” goal than the word-for-word. They can be very colloquial and use expressions found in popular culture or vocabulary particular to a certain social group. Paraphrases then fall much closer to the far end of the idea-for-idea approach than do translations. They tend to smooth out any ambiguities found in the original languages and often are influenced by having a particular pragmatic or theological agenda. And that agenda becomes the overriding theme woven throughout.

Another factor is that a paraphrase almost always is produced by an individual, who may or may not be a scholar, and not by a consortium of scholars. The problem is that such paraphrases may be overly influenced either by the particular theological or personal opinions or agenda of the single individual producing it and/or be too influenced by the particular contemporary historical/social/cultural/ political context of the audience to whom it is addressed (students, pastors, children, etc.). So, paraphrases are by nature very far from word-for-word translations. They may bring in ideas, concepts or agendas that color the ideas selected by the one who is paraphrasing to translate the biblical ideas found in the original language texts.

In the case of words or concepts that are ambiguous in the original languages (have a range of meanings or in some rare cases are unknown by us today) very often what happens is that all ambiguity is resolved by the paraphrase with the result that readers have no clue that there was a range of possible meanings or that no one knows for sure exactly what the biblical author was meaning.

**There is also another kind of paraphrase that is best described as “amplified” versions**, whether they are called that or not. These may make use of the original language texts, but employ many words, concepts and images to translate an individual word or short phrase found in the original texts. Such amplification amounts to explanations, interpretations or interpolations of the original texts, not strictly then, translation. Such amplified paraphrases *have* to make use of certain agendas, theological schemes or pragmatic considerations to provide those expansions, clarifications. Such amplification adds in much that is simply not present in words or concepts found in the original language of the biblical texts. Such amplifications may or may not be accurate or helpful. The only way to know is to compare the amplification to the original language biblical texts!

So which kind of Bible is the best to use? Well, it partly depends upon the purpose for its use. Paraphrases can be useful for helping us break out of having the Bible be so familiar that it becomes kind of dull and ordinary. In that case we don’t hear anything, or expect anything fresh and challenging. We have biblical ruts in our minds when we hear familiar passages. Having the Bible in a version that uses familiar language can also help us see better some contemporary implications or applications in our own setting. They can suggest applications that we might miss or give us a new metaphor or analogy to think about God or his ways.

But what about the weaknesses of a paraphrase mentioned above? A paraphrase can minimize those weaknesses and have some positive benefits when used by persons who *already* have a good familiarity with at least one solid standard translation that leans towards the word-for-word approach.

That foundation will help those readers detect when too much accommodation to current thought or popular opinion is really coloring the paraphrase. Such a grounding will also help those readers identify places where individual bias—personal or special (non-central or historically orthodox) doctrinal preference—has determined the meaning conveyed in the selected images and ideas. So, paraphrases can have a place in the Christian life when used along with more solid translations.

**You can see then that a good translation rather than a paraphrase or amplified version should serve as the foundation of Christian preaching, teaching, devotion and especially a church’s doctrine.** Translations are also better to be used in the public reading of Scripture, especially in worship services. Translations are designed to deliver to us words and concepts/ideas that are much closer to the preserved writings of the biblical writers/teachers and to the meaning conveyed to their audiences. Translations are less likely to be overly influenced by a particular distinctive denominational theological bias or be the victim of individual ignorance, bias or contemporary prejudice. If God selected to speak his word through certain individuals at certain times and places and had those preserved, then that providential work of God is best honored by translations rather than paraphrases, and especially by amplified paraphrases.

In the history of the church, normative or official teaching, that is, church doctrine, has been based on the biblical texts in the original languages. So today, any standard or normative teaching, preaching and pastoral counseling should be grounded in at least translations of the Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek, if not from an understanding of those languages and the cultural contexts in which they were written. These practices and ministries of the church should depend upon translations that have support from a range of theological traditions that hold in high regard the authority and normative place of the whole of Holy Scripture as a gift from God inspired and preserved by his providence.

For the normative purpose of church doctrine, and so for its worship, preaching and teaching, then, paraphrases will not be sufficient. And of the translations to be used for this purpose, it will be best to give preference to those leaning towards the word-for-word side of the translation spectrum, but without expecting there to be an exact correspondence from one language to another. A denomination or even a local congregation should avail themselves of the gifts of those

who have adequate expertise to make use of the original language texts or of secondary resources such as commentaries, and theological books and journals that do make use of them.

Such persons and resources can then also help us sort through and make clearer the meaning of any particular English translation or affirm that a particular biblical text is simply ambiguous to us now.

What about the Christian who doesn't have special training? What version should such a person use to read, reflect on, and even study—listen to carefully and prayerfully? The answer is certainly that an individual or even a congregation should probably have a favorite solid translation and then supplement it with occasional selective readings from a paraphrase.

But, for the purposes of deeper meditation and study, the best approach for those who do not have facility with the original languages, would be to make use of two or three of the best English translations, not just one. Some parallel versions of the Bible provide this by means of side-by-side translations.

The comparison made between several translations should *not* be used to place in tension or in contrast one word or phrase taken from one translation with the other. Rather, the aim would be to see how the various words and phrasings *overlap* in meaning. Remember, each translation is translating the *same* words and phrasings from the original language. So, the differing choices of words or phrases of the different translations represent angles or facets of one and the same biblical word or concept, not two separate or divergent meanings or realities. So, we should aim to see how the different translations of a passage coalesce in meaning, each contributing a facet, rather than setting them against one another and arguing for one over the other. Look for confluence of meaning, not divergence.

And **second**, always give preference to the meaning supported by the context in which the passage is found. That context should include first the immediate context of the surrounding sentences and paragraphs. Then, and very important, the place of the text in question in the context of the chapter and the flow and argument of whole book.

**Third**, attempt to discover the meaning that fits in the context of the whole of the New or the Old Testaments. **Fourth**, look for the meaning seen in the context of the whole Bible *in the order in which it unfolds*, moving from Old Testament (preparation) to New Testament (fulfillment). The final meaning ought to shed light on the preparation expounded earlier.

**And finally**, any given passage should be understood in the light of the context of Jesus Christ himself, as presented in the New Testament, who is the embodied fulfillment of the Word of God in person; who is the living Source of the whole of the Written Word by the Holy Spirit. It is his meaning that we ultimately are looking for. And we do so by trusting in the illuminating ministry of his Holy Spirit working in the church and making use of its doctrinal summaries of biblical teaching as found and affirmed down through the ages and given expression today through the Christian church. These would include "The Apostles Creed," the "Nicene Creed," "The Chalcedonian Definition" the "Athanasian Creed," and GCI's "[Statement of Beliefs](#)" and its "[We Believe](#)" series. The task of biblical interpretation is the task of the community of believers with the assistance of those particularly gifted and called to interpret biblical revelation as we have preserved for us in the original language texts.

As a final word, we suggest for the purposes of group or individual meditation and study and for reading in worship, preaching, teaching and counseling using two or three of these English translations: the **NIV, ESV, NRSV, ASV and the NKJV**.

**GCI principle website and Moncton Websites**—a) [www.gci.org](http://www.gci.org) , b) [www.worshiphim.ca](http://www.worshiphim.ca) , c) [www.facebook.com/GCIMoncton](https://www.facebook.com/GCIMoncton) ; d) Grace Communion International-Moncton <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqKazyWhmKmdZy69vJcFfPg>  
For a wealth of helpful articles about God, grace and his plan for salvation, who we are, etc., please see the GCI.org website.  
Contact Information: Pastor's contact information: email— [evautour47@outlook.com](mailto:evautour47@outlook.com)