

BIBLE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

By Robert C. Veil, Jr.

Question: Which translation of the Bible do you recommend for general use?

Answer: It seems to me the most important consideration in selecting a Bible translation is accuracy. There are several translations which are “tried-and-true,” and known to be highly accurate. We primarily recommend the King James Version and the American Standard Version. The King James Version, first published in 1611, has been a best-selling translation for over 400 years. Its beautiful rendition of the original manuscripts in highly reverent form has made it popular not only for serious Bible study book for devotional reading. More importantly, it is generally recognized as being highly accurate. The American Standard Version of 1901 is probably the most accurate and literal Bible translation in general use today ever produced in English. Although it is becoming more difficult to find, it is still sold by several sources, and can be obtained and studied with great profit.

In addition, for those who prefer to use a newer translation, the New American Standard Bible and the New King James Version can be used comparatively with the older translations. These versions generally hold to the literal tradition of Bible translations, but have used updated English to make them more readable.

Although the popular New International Version is easy to obtain and read, one should be aware that it contains considerable denominational bias and error. It is much more of a *paraphrase* than the more literal translations mentioned above. While it can be a helpful study tool, it should be used comparatively, and checked carefully against the more reliable translations.

I generally do not recommend the modern paraphrases and single author versions. These works typically contain far too much of their author's opinions, as opposed to a faithful, precise translation of the original. I would also avoid any version specifically issued by one particular religious group, as they too generally contain considerable bias.

We should be thankful that we live in a time where the word of God is generally available, at very reasonable cost, and in highly accurate form. It is a very serious matter to rightly receive and understand God's word, and we should take the question of Bible translation very seriously. I recommend that we select one of the time-honored, accurate translations, make a careful study of it, and then apply it faithfully in our lives!

Robert C. Veil, Jr. has been a gospel preacher with the Church of Christ for over 40 years. He currently preaches monthly for the Broad Top Church of Christ. Submit your Bible questions to him at Central Church of Christ, 90 Waverly Court, Martinsburg, WV 25403.