

Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

7 February 2016

Topics

A.M. Bible Class:

The God of all comfort (2 Corinthians 1:1-11)!

A.M. Lesson:

Speaker: Greg Briggs

P.M. Lesson:

What draws all men to Christ (John 12:20-36)?

Wednesday:

Christian Evidences (in the Annex)

Pulpit Evangelist

Ken Knowlton: 428-3494

Elders

Greg Briggs: 428-8756

John Cunningham: 428-0895

Sunday Bible Class	10:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship	6:30 P.M.
Wednesday Evening Class	6:30 P.M.
Thursday Ladies Bible Class	10:00 A.M.

*Great are the works of the Lord,
studied by all who delight in them. Psalm 111:2
Please silence your cell phones and other electronic devices.*

Is righteousness impossible?

1 John 5:3. *For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome...* (NRSV).

We show our love for God by obeying his commandments, and they are not hard to follow (CEV).

Many religious people tell us it is impossible.

The verse evangelicals love to quote:

John 3:16, RSV. *For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*

(20 verses later) the verse they love to ignore:

John 3:36. *He who believes in the Son has eternal life; he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God rests upon him.*

That evil spirit adversary

Neil Short

After Jesus was baptized, he went "into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil" (Matthew 4:1). In the text, the person who met Jesus in the wilderness is called "the tempter" (4:3). After three temptations, Jesus called this person "Satan."

Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'" (Matthew 4:10)

The New Testament often uses common, everyday, first century words to describe some very specific New Testament concepts (church, elders, deacons, baptism, angels, apostles). Similarly, the terms that describe that evil adversarial spirit are common everyday first century words.

"Devil" is a Greek word (*diabolos*) that means "false accuser, slanderer." In most New Testament cases, the spirit evil-guy is meant; and the Bible translators render the word as "devil." Occasionally, the evil-guy is not intended; for example, in the place where the qualifications of deacons is described, there is mention of woman (deacons' wives?) qualifications:

The women likewise must be serious, no slanderers [*diabolos*], but temperate, faithful in all things. (1 Timothy 3:11, RSV. See also 2 Timothy 3:3; Titus 2:3)

Sometimes, there is a double meaning intended, or it is unclear how the word should be translated. Take, for example, John 6:70.

Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil [*diabolos*]? He spoke of Judas the son of

Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was to betray him. (John 6:70-71, RSV)

Every translation I know of calls Judas a “devil” in John 6:70; but it is possible that the meaning is better conveyed with “slanderer” rather than “devil.”

“Satan” is a Greek word (*satanas*), ported over from the Aramaic language. It means “adversary.” In most English translations, the word is always translated as “Satan” (36 times!). In almost every case, *satanas* clearly means “Satan.” In one case, it is possible the word might be better translated as “adversary.” Consider the place where Peter rebuked Jesus for submitting to martyrdom. Jesus called Peter Satan.

But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan [*satanas*!] You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.” (Matthew 16:23)

Jesus may have been calling Peter his adversary rather than the dark spirit evil-guy. The translational consensus is, nevertheless, in favor of “Satan” in that passage. Furthermore, “get behind me” is discipleship language; and discipleship may be the stronger point in the verse than what Jesus meant by using the word *satanas*.

Obviously, it is not necessary for us to know Greek to study the Bible. Still, it sometimes helps to have some handy study notes to point out occasional double-meanings that are not evident in English.

Is it better to read the New Testament in Greek than in English?

Mark Ward, blog.logos.com, 2016 February 4

Translations are the first line of Bible teaching, the first line of interpretation. And it’s a line extremely close to the baseline. Having ten translations is like having ten teachers who are focused, laser-like, on the Bible text, doing barely anything more than reading it with expression and feeling. (Have you ever gained a better understanding of the Bible just by listening to someone read it out loud? I have.) Their expressions and their feelings will differ for various reasons, and it is in those contrasts that the value of reading

multiple translations lies.

Those contrasts occur because, while it’s easy to read your own language lazily, when you translate from one language to another, you are forced to slow down, to notice things and make choices. Which sense of this verb—there are two possibilities—did the author intend?

Yes, things can get lost in translation—but I believe things can be gained in translations, plural. Somewhere in the nexus of tiny interpretive decisions flying around and bumping into each other, translation to translation, understanding grows.

I don’t want to say that translations add something to the Bible, anymore than a teacher adds something by his teaching. But I can’t and won’t deny that using multiple translations helps me understand the Bible better.

News:

Greg Brigs is scheduled for surgery on February 12. Ken Cocke fell and hurt his shoulder. He is expected to have a lengthy recovery.

Ken Knowlton is recovering from surgeries.

Bob Banfield is Greg and Louella’s son-in-law (husband of their daughter Tracy). He is being treated for kidney cancer. He recently had a surgery to remove one kidney. The doctors are pretty confident they removed all of the cancer.

Extended prayer list:

Sam Appleton—declining health

Robin Richards—depression, back pain

John Cunningham—cancer

Norma Robinson—health

Linda Boling—health

H.L. Boling—general health and complications from leukemia

Ken Knowlton—surgery recovery

Tatyana Knowlton—macular degeneration

Nic and Ani Self—health and personal needs

