NOTES CONCERNING

GENDER ISSUES IN THE GREEK

NEW TESTAMENT:

Focusing Upon First Corinthians

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I was quite surprised when I read in Goetichus (refer to "References Cited"),

> Every Greek noun has, or belongs to, a gender, which it retains in all syntactic circumstances.

This cannot be true! ο παις is masculine, "the male child", whereas η παις is feminine "the female child". Child (παις) itself has not been altered or inflected, this sample along with other "common gender" forms which could be produced, contradicts Goetichus. Or do I misunderstand him? perhaps he was just simplifying the issue appropriate for a beginners grammar of Greek? In his context, one could sense that he was truly in error!

Gender, in Koine Greek (or better in the Greek New Testament), seems to have become a controversial issue especially in the United States. With the publication of each "new" English translation of the sacred text, the issue flares up.

Besides language "drift" (to be discussed) a cause can certainly be seen in the cultural upheavals of the 1960s in America. Along with the Beatles, came drugs, a lack of respect for authority, disdain for military endeavors, liberal educational agendas, womens' liberation, new-age theologies and a complete synchronic perspective as to history and its value. The moral fabric of America was beginning to unravel. Related to language and gender, was the evolving understanding or semantics of various English terms, such as: *man, woman, female, male, husband, wife, marriage, sex, history, sin, myth.* Especially for our purposes, *man.*

One of the methods used—via which feminists, or those promoting feminist agendas—is to alter a culture's view of its language use, primarily in gender related terms. These feminists have tenaciously fought to inject (or, magnify) "gender" into American English. From the numerous liberalistic-oscillated institutions a plethora of propaganda-like articles and books have been produced, materials which strive to convince the public that the English word *man* is sexist. Certainly a society is changed when its language is changed, and visa-versa. Hence, a powerful tool is wielded by these folks who seem bent on changing our minds and ideas. "Change" is their watchword, it is practically their lone premise supporting their argument.

Yet here, we must take note of Sapir's language "drift".

> Language moves down time in a current of its own making. It has drift. If there were no breaking up of a language into dialects, if each language continued as a firm self-contained unity, it would still be constantly moving away from any assignable norm, developing new features unceasingly and gradually transforming itself into a language so different from its starting point as to be in effect a new language. [*Language*]

As an optimist Sapir, would encourage or approve of language drift or change, as it was a natural evolution. Of course language does not do so "of its own making". The language users can alter the speed of the transformation, as well as its direction. A vector, possessing magnitude and direction. I oppose drift. My opposition does not stop change, but it can assist with slowing it down, slowing its intensity or magnitude, one person at a time. What Sapir does not acknowledge, is that history makes it clear that entropy is the result of all language change over time. Degradation, simplification, reduction, and laziness all contribute to a language's caducity.

Disappearing cases, lost distinctions and an emphasis upon speech laws has greatly contributed to the decline of English in America. As a culture degrades, so does its language, and the opposite is also true; as a language degrades so does its users.

So much for my lamentations. Man, to me will always be a generic term used to indicate all humans: men, women, children. Prefixing the stem can produce WOman and HUman, useful alterations, yet man still is man. It is the context (and affixes) which supplies its gender, if any. Alone it is unmarked. In fact gender in English has all but lost its grammatical indications:

> With the disappearance of grammatical gender the idea of sex became the only factor in determining the gender of English nouns. [Baugh]

Though *he*, *she* and *it*, still survive, they are the sad remains of a once quite full repertoire of pronouns in older English. I suppose that I am giving away my age, but in English *man* did not acquire a masculine gender until circa A.D. 1000, prior to that it always meant "human being", neuter. After A.D. 1000, it meant both "human being" and a "human male". I am a throw-back, yet prior to the late 1300s *girl* meant "a young person of either sex" [also via *Webster's Word Histories*]; if someone referred to me as a girl, they had better be insured! So I am inconsistent, but in a proper historical sort, not without reason. Girl, was always a particular type or class of a human-being (young), whereas man, was totally generic even referring to a dead human, but always a human.

Feminists in their efforts to advance the speed of "drift" would of course seek change in the most basic and important of all written texts, the Bible. Upon it, their aggressions became focused.

In the Greek New Testament, translators have struggled with several gender related issues. I have selected αδελφος which will be used to demonstrate some of the difficulties (or supposed difficulties) involved with translating in this current liberal milieu.

Greek like all languages, has experienced linguistic evolution, clearly observable over its exceptionally long history. Modern Greek being the latest iteration. Yet one must be careful not to impose upon the Koine Greek of the New Testament (circa A.D. 50-98) laws and semantics of modern Greek. Likewise, it seems unwise to impose modern English novelties of expression upon the older staid English of the classical period of English (exemplified best with the language seen in the 1611 King James Version).

This is reflected in the proper retention of pronouns of dignity such as: Thine, Thy and Thou. Archaic or nearly obsolete words such as: canker, amerce, bereft, betrothed, kinswoman, peradventure, prevent, agone, betwixt, ambassage, apostasy, backbitting, gluttony, *et al*, are all perfectly good words, and which add a proper sense of nobility and stability to the text. They add and enhance the sense of timelessness. Most modern translations, have of course, not retained these glorious words. In using modern substitutions translators, themselves, have contributed to their obsolescence.

It is so easy to move downstream, much harder to return to the solid rock of security and proven or clearly known semantics. Translations must, I repeat, must change former texts, else they cannot claim to be different. Often change for the sake of change, or is the reason financial, or an exercise to occupy the bored? Translations should improve over time, but some of the newer English translations seem quite preposterous, contributing little to understanding or growth; whereas others offer some improvements.

"Brethren", is an English word still in use in many Bibles, though diminishing in the face of the popularity of the plural "brothers". In the 1967 work by Kučera and Francis, we note that "brethren" is used 8x in 4 genre types, whereas "brothers" is used 41x in 13 genre. "Brethren" is surely doomed to disappear except in historical studies (though it is alive and well in my writing).

In the older literal translations of the New Testament, "brethren" is the English translation of αδελφων (and of the other plural forms). The dictionary form of αδελφων is αδελφος, which is nominative singular, and masculine. Grammatically it is masculine, it is also masculine via "natural" gender. Αδελφος is classed in the second declension. In Greek, gender permitted accurate concord, especially as Greek is/was not reliant upon word order. This concord or agreement, greatly clarified communication, and reduced misunder-standings. Concord amongst nouns, pronouns, adjectives, articles (also known as determiners) and participles consisted of agreement betwixt case, number and gender.

In Sweet's 1899 history of language, he wrote:

It is now, indeed, generally agreed that grammatical gender in Aryan is not the result of personification, but has developed out of a different distinction which had originally nothing to do with distinctions of sex.

...Greek, neuter plural nouns are regularly associated with verbs in the singular can only be explained on the assumption that the neuter plural was originally a collective or abstract noun: when a Greek said "all things changes," he must originally have meant "totality (panto) changes," or something of the kind.

    The fact that the Aryan neuter plural ending was in some instances at least originally the same as the feminine singular, as in Latin bona, leads inevitably to the further inference that feminine endings had originally the same collective or abstract meaning; which is confirmed by the fact that most abstract nouns are still feminine in the Aryan languages.

Not all linguists agree with Sweet (though certainly Brugmann does), yet the argument for the priority for grammatical gender as being the original type of gender in Greek certainly seems better associated with the facts of history than does the anthropological arguments for the natural gender made popular by Sapir.

Originally, αδελφος meant "from the same womb". Viewing the "prefix" α– in its conjunctive use (*like, with, and*) coupled with δελφυς which meant *womb*. It is not known in Mycenaean Greek, at least not yet, but it is seen in Homer, wherein he uses it to mean: *brother,* one from the same womb. Later in the Attic (circa 300 B.C.) it contained the added nuances of "related to, akin to" (s.v. Thompson). Around the time period of the Qumran communities it came to also mean, "members of a brotherhood", much like a fraternity. In the New Testament, it retains the basic monosemic meaning of "from the same womb" as well as "a spiritual community" especially of "Christians"; Christians in a generic sense, often without the denotations of gender or sex. Thus, by analogy, one can infer that it came to have a specialized meaning as:

spiritual brothers and sisters with the same father (*i.e.* God)

This meaning is the primary one when a plural vocative is used: UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED WITH SUPPORTING CONCORD VIA A NOUN, PRONOUN, ARTICLE OR ADJECTIVE, OR A CLEAR CONTEXTUAL DEFINITION.

Another Greek word, used more often in Homer than αδελφεος for brother, was κασιγνετος (κασιγνητος) with a very old history, reaching back unto circa 1300 B.C. in the Cyprian vocabulary in which

it is seen as: *ka-si-ke-ne-to-se* (per transcription as seen in Supplement, Liddell and Scott). Early on it contained inflected forms for both brother and sister. It too is a compound word, κασι– (*τεκασσα) basically *brother, sister,* and possibly *child* or even suggested by some as *cousin;* and γνητος which means *legitimately born,* or simply *birthed.* It shares much of the same semantics as αδελφος yet, interestingly, it is not used in both the Greek New Testament and in the Greek Old Testament (the LXX).

Also, interesting is the observation that neither αδελφος nor κασιγνητος is related to the Sanskrit word for "brother" - भ्रातरौ , being in transcription, *bhratarau* (MacDonell). This Sanskrit word is a root for our English word *brother* and *brethren*, but not for our two Greek terms above (the Sanskrit word can be inflected to mean *sister*). It is akin to the Greek φρητρη which in Homer meant *brotherhood* or *clan.* It is also a root for our words: *fraternal, fraternity.* φρητρη also is not seen in the Greek New Testament nor the LXX.

Αδελφη, "sister", is of course from the same root as αδελφος, however it belongs to the first declension. Evidence viewed chronologically clearly shows that it is a later occurring form, formed apparently as a feminine from an earlier masculine αδελφος. To my knowledge, it is never used to indicate anyone male, nor indicating a group of persons which may include males. It is always and only referring to the female species.

Etymologically, it is possible to suspect that the Greek αδελφος contained meanings from both ancient Greek as well as from early Indo-European influences. In modern Greek, both κασιγνητος and φρητηρ did not survive, as forms of αδελφος replaced these terms.

Hopefully we have defined αδελφος as it occurs in the source language for our English Bibles. Originally it meant brothers from the same womb. Later it incorporated the meaning of a brotherhood even as *spiritual brothers and sisters with the same father* (*i.e.* God), especially as used in the New Testament. It now remains to display and explain its rendition into our target language, English.

Paul uses forms of αδελφος in I Corinthians a total of 38x, or 39x depending upon which Greek text one follows. Twice only does he use the feminine forms of αδελφη; at I Corinthians 7:15 and at 9:5. The word αδελφος occurs often in First Corinthians as the epistle is addressed to a church, a Christian church, so it is a natural form/word of direct address. Of the total of 38 usages, the word has a determiner 14x, the other 24 usages lack a determiner (article).

The two grammatically inflected feminines are properly translated as *sister;* however, in some translations, the occurrence at 9:5 is rendered as *"a believing [wife]"* interpreting αδελφην as a believer as opposed to a "sister". Yet, in the *Revised Standard Version,* the footnote gives a fine rendition as: "a sister as wife" which note is also retained in the *New Revised Standard Version,* (henceforth NRSV). Sister is equated with believer in their main texts, however the most literal translation would be "sister as wife" per the original Greek - αδελφην γυναικα. Two accusatives, and in an apposition-like construction after the verb (*s.v.* Robertson). "Sister as wife" emphasizes the unity, with "sister" bringing out the monosemic (s.v. Ruhl) meaning "of same womb" (*i.e.* same father). Her being a believer is implied, but better is the semantic contribution of "sister" stemming from the inherent meaning of αδελφος/αδελφη in antiquity, a deeper spiritual unity.

The Greek masculine αδελφος presents more challenges to translators (or so it seems lately). "More" probably as it is used more in our epistle. One of the first major English translations to alter the common "brothers" or "brethren" to other English, gender inclusive forms, was the NRSV of 1989. Here is how it renders forms of αδελφος and αδελφη in I Corinthians:

αδελφος (in all of its forms, including plurals)

brother	3x
brothers	2x
brothers and sisters	18x
brother or sister	1x
believer	4x
believers	2x
husband	1x
members of your family	1x
them	1x
their	1x
friends	2x
beloved	1x

αδελφη (including all of its forms)

believing	1x
sister	1x

I Corinthians 11:2 has αδελφοι in the majority of manuscripts, Greek manuscripts from Egypt omit this probable vocative "brothers".

To be fair, the men and women who made up the translation committee for the NRSV were paid, and they were operating under strict mandates, one of which was:

> ...in references to men and women, masculine-oriented language should be eliminated as far as this can be done without altering passages that reflect the historical situation of ancient patriarchal culture. [per *To the Reader,* NRSV].

The above quote is not from the actual mandate given to the committee by the National Council of Churches of Christ—which holds copyright to the earlier RSV and the NRSV—but via Metzger's recollection. One of the contributors, Walter Harrelson, later wrote in 1990, concerning committee members of both the Old and New Testaments:

> ...a consensus built up over the remaining years that we could and must eliminate masculine language that was not clearly intended to refer only to males.

Harrelson's full article is very informative, it reveals some of the whys certain forms were used and why plural forms were used especially in the Hebrew texts, *et cetera*. Harrelson's recollections are useful, though they are not always acceptable justifications.

There is not one rule which covers all usages of our words in question. I recall—back in circa 1979—writing to the editors of the *New Amercian Standard Bible* (NASB) and asking why they omitted αδελφοι at Acts 7:2. They (actually Dr. George Giacumakis, a member of the NASB's editorial board) had no answer, but said that the matter would be considered in a planned future update. It was/is not seen in their updated edition (1996) either, nor does the *International*

Standard Version include all of the words, which version Giacumakis also is involved with. Its presence in Acts 7:2 stymied me. The text read: "...men, brothers and fathers". In Stephen's famous address, he was addressing the Jewish Council, and undoubtedly there were only men present. So why not just "men and Fathers" (ανδρες και Πα-τερες)? What was the function of the added αδελφοι? Dr. Luke at Acts 1:16 gives us a good indication: in the Acts 1:16 case, women and men (disciples) were amongst the 120 disciples present, as implied in verse 14. [Others have rendered these αδελφοι as "sirs" or "gentlemen", but what of "ladies"]? In Acts 1:16 Peter uses ανδρες and αδελφοι, as apparently besides "men" (ανδρες) OTHERS were present, who must be either, women or believers or both! In The Acts 7:2 usage of αδελφοι it must refer to "believers", believers who were present in that Jewish Council. In analyzing both occurrences (7:2 and 1:16) a probable conclusion is that αδελφοι means "believers" whether male or female.

Perhaps here would be a good place to note that back at the turn of the century between the 1800s and the 1900s, the *Twentieth Century New Testament*, would capitalize the "B" of Brothers when it was used in a collective or generic sense meaning a special group (Christians), even when an individual believer is meant as at I Corinthians 1:1, "...And from Sosthenes, our Brother." Normal siblings are not capitalized, such as at Matthew 13:55, "...and his brothers James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas?". A fine and carefully thought-out innovation.

The major difficulty lies in the reality that the Greek term for "brother" did evolve into one wherein a special group was identified or addressed. Naturally the group was/is Christians, and Christians

are composed of males and females of all ages. In this sense and in this sense only it is inclusive. However, when a singular form is used with a masculine determiner, a close scrutiny is required to determine if it is inclusive or not.

An example of a singular form without a determiner would be seen in I Corinthians 5:11:

νυνι δε εγραψα υμιν μη συναναμιγνυσθαι εαν τις αδελφος ονομαζομενος η πορνος η πλεονεκτης η ειδωλολατρης η λοιδορος η μεθυσος η αρπαξ τω τοιουτω μηδε συνεσθιειν

but now, I wrote unto you not to keep company, with any so-called brother if a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; do not even eat with such a one. (typical traditional translation)

The NRSV reads in part:

...not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother or sister who is sexually immoral...

The footnote to this text in the NRSV indicates that they are aware that the original Greek reads "brother", so where did "sister" come from? Obviously they felt that "brother" was sexist and rudely seems to omit female Christians. In light of our modern levels of proficiency, or of our modern levels of communication, many readers may not realize that the Greek "brother" can mean the "Christian community" or "spiritual siblings with the same Father", in a collective sense. The pronoun for "any" τις being indefinite (hence "any") is also mas-

culine ᴏʀ feminine. Hence, their rendition here, as "brother or sister" seems justified, and it is an improvement which contributes to the readers' understanding. Had Paul meant males only he most likely would have added a proper determiner ᴀɴᴅ a different type of pronoun.

As concerns the NRSV's numerous renditions of the plural as "bothers and sisters" most of the occurrences involve plural forms of αδελφος and are in the vocative case. In light of the contexts, Paul is typically not addressing just the male Christians at Corinth, else he would be guilty of causing unwarranted divisions which he warns against in chapter 1 verse 10, in which he also uses the word αδελφοι, a plural in the vocative case, without a determiner. Since "brethren" is not apparently (as stated by numerous modern translators) understood in its wider Greek usage, ("from the same womb" or "members of a spiritual group whose Father is God") it becomes necessary to put it into language which the readers of this day and age can understand. Few readers are actually classicists [unfortunately!].

Perhaps the most questionable translation in I Corinthians may be at 8:11, wherein the NRSV reads "believers" for a masculine, singular αδελφος, which also has the masculine determiner in many manuscripts, and in all manuscripts connected to an accusative, singular, masculine relative pronoun ον. Here the deck is stacked against their translation. Certainly Paul means "a brother" as a generic/collective member of the Body of Christ, a Christian or a believer. Yet he actually used the Greek word for "brother", but—as mentioned—in a sense which many of todays' readers may not apprehend. "Believers" may promote the collective idea, but the NRSV's plural form is not good

translation. "Believer" singular, would certainly be much more proper. Other renditions such as: *friends, them, their* and *beloved* simply generate improper connotations, which I do not even view as translations.

The NRSV has made some ambitious efforts in clarifying gender issues, but they have also distorted certain passages. The translation is neither recommended, nor rejected, it just needs to be used with caution. Most readers however, have not the time or skills needed to carefully evaluate this version and others which are experimenting with new gender/inclusive renditions.

Recently this was published in a local newspaper from the AP wire service (March 2011):

New Bible draws critics over gender

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — In the old translation of the world's most popular Bible, John the Evangelist declares: "If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar." Make that "brother or sister" in a new translation that includes more gender-neutral language and is drawing criticism from some conservatives who argue the changes can alter the theological message.

The 2011 translation of the New International Version Bible, or NIV, does not change pronouns referring to God, who remains "He" and "the Father." But it does aim to avoid using "he" or "him" as the default reference to an unspecified person.

The NIV Bible is used by many of the largest Protestant faiths. The translation comes from an independent group of biblical scholars that has been meeting yearly since 1965 to discuss advances in biblical scholarship and changes in English usage.

Before the new translation even hit stores, it drew opposition from the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, an organization that believes women should submit to their husbands in the home and only men can hold some leadership roles in the church.

The council decided it would not endorse the new version because the changes alter "the theological direction and meaning of the text," according to a statement. Similar concerns led the Southern Baptist Convention to reject the NIV's previous translation in 2005.

At issue is how to translate pronouns that apply to both genders in the ancient Greek and Hebrew texts but have traditionally been translated using masculine forms in English.

The NIV (*New International Version*) has—since its creation in 1973 (for the NT portion)—been producing new editions, or updates. It is in a state of constant flux. This does not improve its image, which image is rather poor since it also is based upon a translation theory known as "dynamic equivalence", which often seems like a paraphrase. The comptrollers governing the NIV translations, were somewhat slow in recognizing certain gender-type language improvements. With their newest release, as disclosed above, they continue to change or alter, but do so in a most temerous manner.

In the newspaper article illustrated above, the text mentioned was I John 4:20, here is how other translations render the Greek:

"I love God," but hates another believer, is a liar.
[*God's Word*, 1997]

"I love God," but hate their brothers or sisters, are liars;
[NRSV, 1989]

"I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar;
[*English Standard Version*, 2001]

"I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar.
[NIV, 1973; also *Holman Christian Standard Bible*, first edition, 1999]

'I love God,' and yet hates his Brother, he is a liar;
[*The Twentieth Century New Testament*, 1904]

"I love God," but hates his brother is a liar.
[*International Standard Version* (preliminary edition, release 2, 2011)

ἐάν τις εἴπῃ ὅτι ᾽Αγαπῶ τὸν θεόν καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ μισῇ ψεύστης
ἐστίν·
[Byzantine Majority Text, I John 4:20a]

In the above Greek, we see a masculine αδελφον with a mascu-
line singular determiner τον and a masculine indefinite pronoun τις,
αυτου is also masculine, giving us the "his". Consider this literal ren-
dition:

> If anyone should say, "I love God," and should consistently hate his brother
> is a liar;

The primary issue displayed in the above case, is should the ab-
solute genders seen in the Greek override a possible logical contextual
sense, wherein αδελφον would mean "brother or sister"? There are
passages in the Hebrew OT in which an appellative for God is in the
feminine gender, yet God certainly is masculine; the Holy Spirit can
be seen as an It, per some grammatical constructions in the Greek
New Testament, yet we know He is a He! In the above, the definition
of αδελφον as "from the same womb", may override the implications
of the masculine genders: *however*, since this is by the Jewish apostle
John, it is possible that he is referring to the male members of the
group, which is often the case in Jewish congregations, females are
often subordinate. Consequently, it seems best to retain the masculine
implications, in this case. Note also the rendering of the present tense,
subjunctive mood "hate" which follows a conditional particle εαν, this
gives us the sense of a condition, a possibility. The *God's Word* rendi-
tion, is socially preferred, but is not really an accurate translation

herein, (seeing brother simply as a "believer"). This particular example published in the Nashville newspaper is a difficult one, but if one adheres to the literal text, then their argument/complaint is valid. The context of this chapter in I John also supports the literal renditions, which includes neuter terms as well: "children" verse 4, and "we", "us", "one another", and retaining the neuter vocative αδελφοι in I John 2:7 as seen in the *New King James Version*, for example.

Hopefully, the reader can by now realize that modern efforts are ambiguous, they offer some improvements, and add additional flaws. Much more effort is needed to really be true to the original Greek and Hebrew texts. For instance, none of the English translations, to date, render the τα παντα(s) seen in Ephesians, as "all humans" or "every human", the plural neuter forms are usually rendered as "all things", which is contextually not acceptable in the five or six usages seen in Ephesians. This is completely new territory for most translators, it requires a profound grasp of both Greek (all periods of Greek), and English. It is also suggested that the translator(s) need to have a valid relationship with the actual Author of the Bible.

In conclusion, I trust it is evident from these few examples that there is a need for gender clarifications in the English New Testament. Much work and effort remains, but some effort has begun. In this respect the feminists of the 1960s are to be congratulated, some of their cries of "unfair" or "sexist" were/are valid.

Perhaps, instead of publishing ever-changing editions of English New Testaments, (especially those controlled by: high-profile publishers, prestigious institutions and those protected by copyright and lawyers) a group of dedicated volunteers ought to consider producing a truly accurate translation! Why is this difficult? Most likely the reasons for the difficulties lie in:

(1)   publishers demands

(2)   demands from various theological belief systems

(3)   financial need of the editors and translators

(4)   translators having no true relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ

(5)   the realization that prior precedents, using semi-volunteers, produced poor or idiomatic results - *i.e. The Twentieth Century New Testament,* 1898 - 1904

(6)   simple historical and world-wide opposition to the truth in general, note I John 3:13, and 4:5,6.

A suggested procedure might be, making charts of all gender related Greek words in the Bible (using computers of course), pairing them with their syntactic contexts (nouns, articles, adjectives, participles) and analyzing each. This should be carefully done with each pronoun and each antecedent and related words as well. (Noting especially troublesome terms such as: ανηρ (man), αδελφος (brother), λαος (people), ανθρωπος (human/man), besides numerous pronouns and adjectives (πας, *et al*) and many other relevant words. This would take some time, even with the aid of computers. Certainly variant readings need resolution as well, which increases the need for translators who are also believers. A complete mastery of the full history of Greek would be required, along with general historical language studies (this uncovers the monosemic meanings, such as seen in the special usages of αδελφος). Anthropologists, theologians, textual critics and linguists, men and women, all believers, all working together. Hopefully, workers not dependent upon said labor for their incomes or financial needs. Objectivity would be a challenge, especially as we today

cannot even define what a Christian is or what he or she needs to believe in order to be so named! Perhaps a vain wish, after all whenever a group tries to work together on theological productions, it seems that the results are disagreements fueled by pompous egos and the protection of public images/statuses, or a production which is fractured by biases and denominational imperialism.

Yet what a noble effort it could be; then again when reality like stark white granite sets into my thinking, it seems highly improbable that any such effort will ever begin. Until such effort is prosecuted, each believer today must educate themselves, and cautiously use the various editions available, giving preference to those translations which have been proven—over the decades or centuries—to be somewhat accurate. This "prosecution" will most likely never occur, particularly if the new *International Standard Version* is a preview of current scholarship. Believers have options: pray, study, think and beware!

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