

REASON TOGETHER CHURCH

THE BIBLE TRANSLATION QUESTION

A TEN-PART SERIES | PART NINE OF TEN

DO GENDER-INCLUSIVE BIBLE TRANSLATIONS CHANGE GOD'S WORD?



DR. THOMAS W. HAWKSLEY

TRUSTING GOD'S WORD THROUGH CAREFUL EXAMINATION

RTS-108: Do Gender-Inclusive Bible Translations Change God's Word?

Sermon Transcript

Reason Together Church

Dr. Thomas W. Hawksley

Aloha.

Welcome to Reason Together Church.

If you are visiting with us today, we are especially glad you are here.

We are grateful for every honored guest who has joined us.

Our invitation is simple.

Bring your questions.

Open your Bible.

Let's Reason Together the Word of God.

Today we have reached Part Nine of our ten-part series, "The Bible Translation Question."

In Part One, we asked whether the King James Version contains translation errors.

In Part Two, we examined whether the KJV we read today is the same as the KJV printed in 1611.

In Part Three, we considered why some verses found in the KJV are absent, bracketed or footnoted in modern translations.

In Part Four, we compared the KJV and the NKJV.

In Part Five, we compared the KJV and the NIV and asked when translation becomes interpretation.

In Part Six, we examined the manuscripts behind the KJV and the ESV.

In Part Seven, we asked whether the KJV or the NASB is more literal.

In Part Eight, we examined word-for-word and thought-for-thought translation.

We learned that no translator can replace every Hebrew or Greek word mechanically with one English word.

Languages do not work that way.

Words have ranges of meaning.

Grammar differs.

Idioms differ.

Context matters.

Today we apply that lesson to one of the most controversial questions in Bible translation.

Our title asks:

Do Gender-Inclusive Bible Translations Change God's Word?

Next time, in Part Ten, we will bring the entire series together.

We will ask which Bible translation, or translations, a Christian should use.

For today, listen to several familiar expressions.

"Man shall not live by bread alone."

"I beseech you therefore, brethren."

"If a man love me."

"Blessed is the man."

"For ye are all the children of God."

When the Bible says "man," does it always mean an adult male?

When Paul says "brethren," is he speaking only to the men?

When a modern translation says "brothers and sisters," has it added words to Scripture?

When a translation changes "he" to "they," has it changed the meaning?

When "sons" becomes "children," has something important disappeared?

Some Christians hear the words "gender-inclusive" and immediately suspect corruption.

Other people assume every masculine expression should be removed.

Neither reaction is careful enough.

Before we can decide whether a translation changed God's Word, we must determine what God's Word meant in the first place.

Let us pray.

Our Father, thank You for speaking to us through Your Word.

Thank You for preserving the Scriptures.

Thank You for those who have labored to translate them.

Give us discernment without suspicion.

Give us conviction without hostility.

Help us preserve every truth You intended.

Help us communicate that truth clearly.

Teach us to distinguish grammatical form from actual meaning.

Guard us from changing Your Word to satisfy our preferences.

Guard us also from confusing familiar English with inspired Hebrew and Greek.

We ask this in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

Our opening Scripture is Genesis 1:26 and 27.

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”

“And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air.”

“And over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.”

“So God created man in his own image.”

“In the image of God created he him.”

“Male and female created he them.”

That passage places the whole question before us.

The word “man” appears three times in our KJV reading.

Then the passage explains whom that word includes.

“Male and female created he them.”

Before we examine that more closely, let me mention a few things about Reason Together Church.

We do not pass an offering plate.

Guests are never expected to give.

If you are a member of another church, we encourage you to give through your home church.

For those who call Reason Together Church home, there is a giving box in the back.

Give only as the Lord leads you, for God loveth a cheerful giver.

Our guest card asks only for your first name and email address.

We would be glad to keep you informed without filling your mailbox or pressuring you.

After the service, please join us at the Reason Together Café.

The coffee is free.

There are free refills on conversations.

COFFEE reminds us that Christ Offers Forgiveness For Everyone Everywhere.

Our Keiki Kids Center is also available for our younger guests.

The word “everyone” in that café reminder is not an accident.

The gospel invitation is not limited to one sex.

Yet the gospel does not erase the people God created as male and female.

That is the balance we must understand.

Let us return to Genesis 1.

The Hebrew word translated “man” is adam.

Sometimes adam identifies humanity.

Sometimes it identifies a human being.

Sometimes it refers to a particular man.

In later contexts it identifies Adam by name.

How do we know what it means in Genesis 1:27?

The verse tells us.

“So God created man in his own image.”

Then it says:

“Male and female created he them.”

The man in that sentence is humanity.

It includes men.

It includes women.

The KJV uses “man” collectively.

That was normal English.

Many readers still understand it.

Other readers hear “man” and think only of males.

That is why a modern translation may say “mankind,” “humankind” or “humanity.”

The English word changes.

The people included do not change.

In fact, the change may prevent the English reader from narrowing a Hebrew word that the passage made broad.

But notice the rest of the verse.

“Male and female created he them.”

No honest translation should erase that distinction.

The verse teaches one humanity.

The verse also teaches two sexes.

Inclusion and distinction stand beside each other.

That brings us to an important lesson.

Grammatical gender is not the same as biological sex.

Grammatical gender classifies words.

Biological sex describes living beings as male or female.

Hebrew nouns have grammatical patterns.

Greek nouns may be masculine, feminine or neuter.

A grammatically masculine word does not always refer only to males.

The Greek word anthropos is a good example.

Anthropos means a human being or person.

Our English word “anthropology” comes from it.

Anthropology is the study of humanity, not merely the study of men.

Yet anthropos can also identify a particular man when the context tells us that the person is male.

Another Greek word is aner.

Aner ordinarily means an adult male or husband.

That word normally contains a real male component.

The difference matters.

A translator who renders anthropos as “person” may be communicating the word accurately.

A translator who hides aner in a passage about a husband may be removing information.

Hebrew has similar distinctions.

Adam often refers to humanity.

Ish commonly means a man or husband, though it can appear in expressions meaning each one or one another.

Enosh often speaks of a mortal human being and emphasizes weakness.

Geber more distinctly identifies a man or male.

The KJV may use the English word “man” for several of these terms.

That does not mean all the Hebrew and Greek words are identical.

English has changed.

Translation sometimes needs “man.”

Sometimes it needs “person.”

Sometimes it needs “humanity.”

Sometimes it needs “husband.”

Sometimes it needs “anyone.”

The real question is not, “Did the English word change?”

The real question is, “Did the meaning change?”

Now turn to Romans 12:1.

Paul writes:

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God.”

“That ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

The KJV says “brethren.”

The Greek word is adelphoi.

The singular adelphos ordinarily means a brother.

The plural adelphoi can mean brothers.

It can also describe a group of siblings.

Among Jews and Christians, it became a family word for fellow members of the community.

Whom did Paul address in Romans 12?

Did he mean only the men in the Roman churches?

Romans 16 helps us answer.

Paul commends Phebe, a servant of the church at Cenchrea.

He greets Priscilla and Aquila.

He greets Mary, “who bestowed much labour on us.”

He greets Tryphena and Tryphosa, “who labour in the Lord.”

He greets Persis, “which laboured much in the Lord.”

Women belonged to the congregations receiving this letter.

Women were included in the call to present their bodies as living sacrifices.

The KJV calls the group “brethren.”

The NIV says “brothers and sisters.”

The CSB says “brothers and sisters.”

The NASB 2020 says “brothers and sisters.”

The ESV says “brothers” and provides a footnote that permits “brothers and sisters.”

Did those translations add sisters to Paul’s audience?

No.

The sisters were already there.

The modern translations added an English word to make the complete audience unmistakable.

That may sound less literal if we count English words.

It may be more accurate if we ask who Paul was addressing.

This does not mean adelphoi must always be translated “brothers and sisters.”

If it identifies male biological siblings, “brothers” is correct.

If the context addresses only men, “brothers” may be correct.

If a mixed congregation is addressed, “brothers and sisters” may communicate the reference accurately.

Context decides.

We must also keep translation separate from later theological conclusions.

Saying that women were members of the Roman church does not answer every question about church leadership.

Audience inclusion is one question.

The qualifications for an office are another question.

We should not ask a translation to settle a debate the verse is not addressing.

Here is the simple truth of Romans 12:1.

The translators did not add sisters to the Roman church.

The sisters were already there.

Now consider John 14:23.

The KJV says:

“If a man love me, he will keep my words.”

“And my Father will love him.”

“And we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”

The Greek word behind “a man” is tis.

Tis means someone, anyone or whoever.

It is not inherently male.

Jesus was not promising fellowship only to male disciples.

“If anyone loves me” directly communicates the Greek expression.

The ESV begins that way.

Several other modern translations do the same.

Has “anyone” changed God’s Word?

No.

It has replaced an older inclusive English expression with a current inclusive English expression.

The KJV's "a man" was ordinary and understandable English.

It included a woman who loved Christ.

The problem is not that the KJV was trying to exclude her.

The problem is that a modern reader may now hear exclusion where the original text did not place it.

That brings us to the generic word "he."

For centuries, English used "he" for a person whose sex was unknown or irrelevant.

Many people still understand it that way.

Contemporary English increasingly uses singular "they."

We say:

"If someone left their Bible in the sanctuary, they may pick it up after the service."

We do not necessarily mean several people.

We mean one unidentified person.

Singular "they" is not a recent invention.

It has appeared in English for centuries.

Its use does not automatically express a position about gender identity.

It can simply solve a grammatical problem English has always had.

It can also create a problem.

Some readers hear "they" and assume more than one person.

An individual statement may begin to sound collective.

A contrast between one person and many people may disappear.

That is why singular "they" should be neither condemned everywhere nor required everywhere.

A translator may use "anyone."

A translator may use "whoever."

A translator may say "the one who."

A translator may use "that person."

A translator may retain "he" when the sentence remains clear.

A translator may use singular "they" when it communicates naturally without ambiguity.

The question is not whether "they" is traditional or modern.

The question is whether it communicates the inspired sentence accurately.

Psalm 1 shows why grammatical number matters.

The KJV begins:

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly.”

“Nor standeth in the way of sinners.”

“Nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.”

“But his delight is in the law of the LORD.”

“And in his law doth he meditate day and night.”

The Hebrew word is ish.

It is masculine and singular.

Does the wisdom of Psalm 1 apply to a godly woman?

Certainly.

But the psalm also paints a picture.

One righteous person stands apart from the wicked.

One person delights in the law of the Lord.

One person is like a tree planted by rivers of water.

The NIV says, “Blessed is the one.”

That communicates the inclusive application while preserving the singular portrait.

The NRSVue says, “Happy are those.”

That clearly includes men and women.

It also changes the one person into a group.

The doctrine has not become wicked.

The general application remains true.

Yet part of the literary form has been weakened.

Sometimes an inclusive translation gets the audience right but the picture wrong.

Translation must protect more than a general idea.

It must consider vocabulary.

It must consider number.

It must consider imagery.

It must consider repeated words.

It must consider the historical setting.

It must consider connections with other passages.

Now we come to one of the most surprising examples.

Turn to Galatians 3:26.

The KJV says:

“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.”

The Greek word translated “children” is huioi.

Its ordinary form is “sons.”

The ESV says “sons of God.”

The CSB says “sons of God.”

The NIV says “children of God.”

The NASB 2020 says “sons and daughters of God.”

But notice this carefully.

The KJV says “children.”

Changing “sons” to “children” cannot automatically be dismissed as a recent feminist alteration.

The translators of 1611 made that choice in this passage.

Does “children” communicate something true?

Yes.

Men and women who believe in Christ belong to the family of God.

The next verses make that inclusion plain.

Verse 28 says:

“There is neither Jew nor Greek.”

“There is neither bond nor free.”

“There is neither male nor female.”

“For ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”

Paul does not say that Jews and Greeks cease to have an ancestry.

He does not say that biological sex disappears.

He says that none of these distinctions creates a superior claim to salvation or the promise.

Every believer is one in Christ.

Every believer belongs to Christ.

Every believer is Abraham’s seed according to the promise.

Why, then, might “sons” still be important?

Because sonship carried recognized standing in the ancient family.

It carried inheritance rights.

In the world Paul addressed, sons were the expected heirs.

Paul applies that standing to every believer.

He is not saying that Christian women become biologically male.

He is saying that they receive no lesser inheritance.

They are not guests standing at the edge of the family.

They receive the standing of heirs.

Galatians 4 makes that meaning even clearer.

Verse 4 says:

“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.”

Verse 5 says:

“To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

Verse 6 says:

“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts.”

Verse 7 says:

“Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son.”

“And if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

The whole passage joins sonship with adoption, standing and inheritance.

“Children” makes the inclusion easy to see.

“Sons” preserves the ancient inheritance picture.

“Sons and daughters” names both sexes, but it may soften Paul’s striking point.

Women in Christ receive the status the culture associated with sons.

A careful translation may preserve “sons” and explain the inclusion in a footnote.

Another may use “children” and explain the inheritance background.

Neither English word carries every part of the Greek and cultural setting by itself.

This is why we need preaching.

This is why we need commentary.

This is why responsible translations provide footnotes.

This is why reading more than one translation can help us.

Here is the principle we must not miss.

We should not make women invisible by erasing the very inheritance Paul says they have received.

Gender-inclusive translation therefore has boundaries.

Some masculine language is not generic.

Some masculine language belongs to Biblical theology.

God has revealed Himself as Father.

Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

“Father” should not become “Parent.”

“Son” should not become “Child” when the passage identifies Jesus as the Son of God.

The Bible compares God’s care to that of both fathers and mothers.

Isaiah 66 speaks of comfort like a mother gives.

That comparison is true and beautiful.

It does not authorize us to replace the name “Father” with “Mother.”

A comparison is not the same as a revealed name.

The title “Son of man” also requires care.

In some Old Testament settings, a son of man is a human being.

In Daniel 7, the expression takes on messianic importance.

Jesus repeatedly calls Himself the Son of man.

A translator who mechanically changes every occurrence to “human being” may hide connections the Biblical writers intended us to see.

Canonical connections matter.

The same care is necessary with husband and wife.

Ephesians 5 addresses wives.

It addresses husbands.

Paul connects that marriage relationship with Christ and the church.

Changing “wives” and “husbands” to “spouses” would not merely modernize English.

It would remove part of Paul’s argument.

Christians may debate how headship and submission should be explained.

Translators must allow us to see the words before interpreters debate their application.

Male and female language must also remain where the text states it.

Genesis 1:27 says “male and female.”

Jesus repeats that truth in Matthew 19.

Paul uses the same distinction in Galatians 3.

Equality of worth does not require the removal of sex distinctions.

Unity in Christ is not the elimination of creation.

Church leadership passages present another important boundary.

First Timothy 3 begins:

“This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.”

The Greek at the beginning uses tis.

It means “if anyone.”

Verse 2 then says:

“A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife.”

That expression includes the Greek word aner.

It is male language.

It may be understood as a “one-woman man,” emphasizing sexual and marital faithfulness.

An inclusive translation should not hide the male expression in verse 2.

At the same time, translating tis in verse 1 as “anyone” does not settle the entire question of who may hold the office.

The grammar of both verses must be examined.

The entire passage must be considered.

Related Scriptures must be considered.

Translation should not quietly decide the theological debate before the reader has seen the evidence.

Inclusive translation must not remove the words that created the question.

This is why “gender-accurate” is a better goal than “gender-neutral.”

Gender-neutral language begins by trying to avoid identifying a person as male or female.

Sometimes that is appropriate because the original word is neutral or inclusive.

Sometimes it removes information because the original word is sex-specific.

Gender-accurate translation asks a better question.

Whom does the original text actually identify or include?

Sometimes accuracy requires “humanity.”

Sometimes it requires “people.”

Sometimes it requires “anyone.”

Sometimes it requires “brothers and sisters.”

Sometimes accuracy requires “man.”

Sometimes it requires “woman.”

Sometimes it requires “husband.”

Sometimes it requires “wife.”

Sometimes it requires “Father.”

Sometimes it requires “Son.”

Gender-neutral translation begins with neutrality.

Gender-accurate translation begins with truth.

It is also important to recognize that conservative translations use gender-accurate language.

The ESV uses “people” when the original clearly includes both sexes.

The CSB uses “brothers and sisters” for mixed congregations.

The NASB 2020 describes its approach as gender-accurate.

These translations retain Father and Son.

They retain husband and wife.

They retain male language where the committees believe maleness belongs to the meaning.

Therefore, one inclusive expression does not prove that a translation has abandoned Biblical theology.

We must reject two extremes.

The first extreme says every inclusive rendering is corrupt.

That cannot be right.

Some Hebrew and Greek words include women.

The KJV’s generic masculine English may be misunderstood today.

The KJV itself translates “sons” as “children” in Galatians 3:26.

Conservative translations sometimes say “brothers and sisters.”

We cannot judge a verse accurately by counting masculine English words.

The second extreme says every masculine expression should be neutralized.

That cannot be right either.

Some words mean man or husband.

Father and Son are theologically important.

Sonship can carry inheritance meaning.

Male and female may belong directly to the argument.

Changing a singular to a plural may weaken the picture.

Historical settings must not be rewritten.

We must not protect old English more faithfully than we protect the original meaning.

We must not protect modern sensitivities more faithfully than we protect the inspired text.

How, then, should an ordinary Christian evaluate one of these differences?

Ask seven questions.

First, who is actually included in the original audience?

Second, does the Hebrew or Greek term carry a genuine male or female meaning?

Third, is the word only grammatically masculine, or is the person actually male?

Fourth, has the translation changed one person into a group?

Fifth, has it removed an inheritance image, family relationship or historical detail?

Sixth, has it erased a Biblical distinction involving father and son, husband and wife or male and female?

Seventh, what do the footnotes and other responsible translations reveal?

Do not be afraid to compare.

Read the KJV.

Read the footnotes.

Check an ESV, NASB, CSB or NIV when the wording materially affects interpretation.

Ask why the words differ.

Do not assume the oldest-sounding English is automatically the most accurate.

Do not assume the newest-sounding English is automatically the clearest.

Follow the evidence.

Return now to our title.

Do gender-inclusive Bible translations change God's Word?

Sometimes inclusive English preserves God's meaning more clearly.

It tells a modern reader that women were included in the original audience.

Sometimes inclusive English weakens or obscures meaning.

It may remove sonship, fatherhood, maleness, individuality or another intentional feature.

The label does not decide the question.

The original language and context decide the question.

We should not preserve masculine English where the Bible meant everyone.

We should not remove masculine meaning where God deliberately placed it.

God created humanity in His image.

He created humanity male and female.

Sin entered the whole human family.

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came into the world to save sinners.

He died upon the cross.

He was buried.

He rose again.

The gospel invitation goes to every person.

Jesus said in John 6:37:

“Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”

That invitation includes you.

But the fact that everyone is invited does not mean everyone is automatically saved.

Each person must respond.

You must recognize your sin.

You must believe that Jesus died and rose again.

You must trust Christ rather than your own goodness, religion or works.

You may come to Him today.

If you have never received Christ as Savior, you can call upon Him now.

Let us pray.

Our Father, thank You that Your gospel is offered to every person.

Thank You that Jesus Christ died for sinners and rose from the grave.

For anyone ready to trust Christ, I invite you to pray from your heart.

Dear God, I know that I am a sinner.

I believe that Jesus Christ died for my sins.

I believe that He was buried and rose again.

I cannot save myself.

Please forgive me.

I place my faith in Jesus Christ alone.

Receive me into Your family and help me follow You.

Thank You for hearing me.

We pray in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

Before we leave, remember what we have learned.

Do not fear every unfamiliar rendering.

Do not accept every modern change without examination.

Read the KJV confidently.

Compare responsible translations carefully.

Read the footnotes.

Ask whom the original text included.

Preserve every Biblical distinction.

Make Biblical inclusion clear.

Judge words by evidence rather than suspicion.

Let accuracy be the standard.

A faithful translation will sometimes retain masculine language.

A faithful translation will sometimes make inclusive meaning explicit.

Wisdom is knowing the difference.

Bring your questions.

Open your Bible.

Let's Reason Together the Word of God.

Aloha Nui Loa.

RTS-108: Do Gender-Inclusive Bible Translations Change God's Word?

Detailed Commentary

Reason Together Church

Dr. Thomas W. Hawksley

Commentary Purpose

This commentary follows the sermon in order and explains the Biblical, linguistic and pastoral reasoning behind its principal claims. It also identifies important qualifications so that the sermon's memorable statements are not pressed beyond the evidence.

The sermon's answer is intentionally conditional. Inclusive English may preserve an inclusive source meaning, or it may remove a meaningful masculine feature. The label on a rendering cannot substitute for exegesis.

1 Series Introduction

The opening locates RTS-108 after the translation-method study. The connection is essential because gender language is not a separate problem invented by contemporary politics. It is one instance of the ordinary translation problem: forms and meanings do not correspond mechanically between languages.

The preview of Part Ten prevents this sermon from sounding like the final verdict on which Bible to use. The present task supplies criteria that will inform that later recommendation.

2 Opening Expressions

The familiar KJV phrases let listeners recognize that the controversy concerns ordinary Bible reading. The questions are framed without assuming an answer. Man, brethren, he, sons and children do not all present the same linguistic issue.

The opening principle gives the sermon its method. A change in English wording can be assessed only after the source meaning is established. Familiarity is evidence of tradition and reception, but it is not by itself evidence of lexical equivalence.

3 Opening Prayer

The prayer thanks God for preservation and translation without declaring all translations equal. It asks for discernment without suspicion because accusation is a recurring danger in translation controversies. It also asks for protection from confusing familiar English with inspired Hebrew and Greek.

The prayer ends in the name of Jesus, consistent with Reason Together Church practice.

4 Genesis 1 26 to 27

Genesis 1:26-27 is the strongest opening text because it joins the two truths often separated in public debate. Adam is collective and includes the human race. The same verse explicitly identifies that humanity as male and female.

The shift from the collective singular to them does not mean the original human was an androgynous being. The text unfolds collective humanity into the two created sexes. Translation must preserve inclusion without dissolving distinction.

5 Giving Note and Congregational Elements

The giving note follows the church's established practice. No plate is passed. Guests are not expected to give. Members of another church are directed to support their home church. The giving box is available for those who call Reason Together Church home, with Second Corinthians 9:7 supplying the cheerful-giver principle.

The guest card requests only first name and email address. The café invitation includes free coffee, free refills on conversations and the COFFEE explanation. The Keiki Kids Center is mentioned. The segue from everyone in the café acronym to the scope of the gospel is brief and does not treat a ministry slogan as proof of the sermon's linguistic claims.

6 Grammatical Gender

The sermon distinguishes a word's grammatical classification from the sex of its referent. This is necessary because arguments sometimes treat every masculine grammatical form as proof that only males are intended. Greek anthropos provides an accessible example because the congregation can connect it with anthropology.

The distinction must not be reversed. Grammatical masculinity may be nonexclusive, but lexically male terms remain meaningful. Aner ordinarily identifies an adult male or husband. The sermon therefore avoids the equally serious error of treating all masculine forms as semantically empty.

7 Hebrew Vocabulary

Adam, ish, enosh and geber are introduced only to the level needed by a congregation. The sermon does not suggest that each term has one rigid English equivalent. Adam can be collective or individual. Ish often identifies a man or husband but participates in distributive and reciprocal idioms. Enosh can emphasize mortality. Geber more distinctly denotes a male.

This range explains why one English word in the KJV may represent several source words and why a modern translation may differentiate them. The point is not that the KJV is careless. The point is that no English word reproduces every lexical distinction.

8 Greek Anthropos Aner and Tis

Anthropos and aner provide the principal contrast between a broadly human term and a male term. Context still controls anthropos because it may refer to a known male individual. Tis is added because

it controls the John 14 example and shows a case where KJV man is supplied as an English indefinite rather than demanded by a male Greek noun.

The preaching sentence about changing an English word preserves the distinction between form and meaning. A wording change may be a semantic preservation rather than a theological revision.

9 Romans 12 1

The adelphoi discussion rests on contextual referents rather than grammatical form alone. Romans 16 gives direct evidence that women belonged to the network of Roman believers and labored in the Lord. Paul's appeal in Romans 12 is addressed to the congregation as a body.

Brothers and sisters is an example of explicitation. The English adds a coordinate noun that the Greek does not separately state, yet it expresses the mixed membership carried by the communal address. Explicitation can be faithful when it makes source meaning clear. It becomes overtranslation when the context does not warrant the added specificity.

10 Audience and Office

The sermon immediately separates congregational inclusion from office qualifications. This prevents Romans 12:1 from being recruited as a shortcut in the debate about women pastors. A woman can be included among the recipients of an epistle without every role in that epistle being identical.

This distinction models the broader method: translate first, interpret carefully and do not require one word to answer a question it was not selected to answer.

11 John 14 23

The KJV phrase if a man love me represents Greek tis. Anyone or whoever is lexically direct in current English. The sermon does not call the KJV inaccurate because a man functioned as a generic indefinite expression in its English setting.

The pastoral concern is receptor understanding. If a current hearer takes man as male-only, the English form has narrowed a promise that the Greek did not narrow. Updating the generic expression can protect the scope of Christ's words.

12 Singular They

The sermon separates indefinite singular they from contemporary claims about the identity of a known individual. Its example involves an unidentified person who left a Bible. This construction has a long history in English and solves the lack of a universally satisfactory common-gender singular pronoun.

Historical legitimacy does not make the form optimal in every verse. They can create number ambiguity and may distract some congregations. The alternatives listed in the sermon preserve flexibility and keep accuracy above fashion.

13 Psalm 1

Psalm 1 tests the cost of pluralization. Ish is masculine singular, and the poem develops one person through singular verbs and pronouns before comparing that person to one planted tree. The wisdom is not limited to males, but the individual literary portrait remains significant.

The NIV's the one is a useful middle rendering. It makes generic application clear while preserving number. The NRSVue's those communicates the inclusive application but pluralizes the portrait. The sermon describes this as a loss of form rather than a denial of doctrine.

14 Galatians 3 26

The KJV's children of God is the sermon's most important historical control. It prevents a simplistic chronology in which sons is ancient and children is always a recent concession. The KJV translators could choose a collective family term when they believed it communicated the passage.

The underlying huioi remains important. Translation must account not only for the sex of the referents but also for the status term applied to them. A group may include women while still being described through a historically male inheritance category.

15 Galatians 3 28

Galatians 3:28 establishes equal participation in union with Christ and the Abrahamic promise. The sermon does not interpret the verse as eliminating ethnicity, social history or biological sex. The repeated neither constructions deny those categories as grounds for superior covenant standing.

This reading supports inclusive referents without importing the conclusion that every distinction or role elsewhere in Scripture has ceased.

16 Galatians 4 and Sonship

Galatians 4:4-7 is necessary because it connects God's Son, adoption of sons, the Spirit of His Son and the believer's status as son and heir. The network of terms makes indiscriminate replacement particularly costly.

The statement that women receive the standing associated with sons is a cultural and theological explanation, not a claim that women become male. The very force of the passage is that no lesser inheritance is assigned to female believers.

17 Why Footnotes and Teaching Matter

No single short English term can always preserve referential inclusion, lexical form, ancient legal status and modern comprehension. A translation may keep sons and explain inclusion, or use children and explain sonship. This is an appropriate role for footnotes and preaching.

The sermon's references to preaching and commentary explain why a transparent limitation is preferable to pretending that translation can remove every need for teaching.

18 Father and Son

The boundary section begins with revealed relational language. Scripture uses maternal comparisons for God's care, but comparisons do not function identically to the Father-Son names. Replacing Father with Parent or the Son of God with the Child of God would change the relationship the text names.

This distinction allows the sermon to affirm every Biblical image without treating all images and names as interchangeable.

19 Son of Man

Son of man has a broad human sense in some contexts and a developed canonical importance in Daniel 7, the Gospels and Hebrews. A purely local substitution may make one verse clearer while hiding a connection across books.

The sermon does not claim that every occurrence is directly messianic. It argues that translators must investigate rather than neutralize mechanically.

20 Husband and Wife

Ephesians 5 uses sex-specific relational vocabulary throughout a comparison with Christ and the church. A spouse rendering would not merely modernize a generic term. It would change the participants in the analogy.

The sermon deliberately does not settle every dispute over submission and headship. Its narrower claim is that translation must leave the textual evidence available for interpretation.

21 Male and Female

Genesis 1:27, Matthew 19:4 and Galatians 3:28 all preserve male and female as meaningful categories. Their theological uses differ, but none authorizes erasing the pair from translation.

The line that equality of worth does not require removal of sex distinction summarizes the sermon's effort to hold inclusion and distinction together.

22 First Timothy 3

First Timothy 3:1-2 contains both the indefinite *tis* and the male *aner* within a connected qualification passage. Anyone can accurately translate *tis*. Husband of one wife or one-woman man keeps the male and marital expression visible.

The sermon acknowledges that the restriction question is larger than one lexical gloss. Syntax, the nature of the idiom, historical expectations and related passages must be assessed. Translation should not erase evidence or pretend that the first indefinite pronoun settles the entire matter.

23 Gender Accurate Translation

The preferred term gender-accurate identifies the governing value. Accuracy may require inclusive language where the referent is mixed. It may require sex-specific language where maleness or femaleness belongs to the meaning.

The contrast with gender-neutral is not meant to claim that neutrality is always wrong. It clarifies that neutrality cannot be the controlling aim when the source is not neutral.

24 Conservative Translation Evidence

The references to the ESV, CSB and NASB 2020 prevent the congregation from treating every inclusive choice as evidence of liberal theology. These versions retain traditional theological language while making mixed audiences explicit in selected texts.

Committee policy is not a substitute for evaluating verses. It is relevant evidence against sweeping motive claims and helps explain why responsible conservative scholars can disagree.

25 Two Extremes

The first rejected extreme protects masculine surface form even when the source reference is inclusive. The second rejected extreme pursues neutrality even when the source contains a meaningful male term or relationship.

The balanced pair of warnings directs loyalty away from both old English and modern sensitivities as ultimate standards. The inspired source meaning is the standard.

26 Seven Evaluation Questions

The seven questions convert the sermon into a repeatable study method. They address audience, lexical sex marking, grammatical gender, number, imagery, theological distinctions and comparative evidence.

The recommendation to compare translations is not an invitation to choose whichever wording one prefers. It is an invitation to notice the question, consult notes and investigate the evidence.

27 Direct Answer to the Title

The conclusion uses sometimes in both directions. This is not indecision. It is the necessary result of a contextual question. Inclusive English can clarify source inclusion, or it can obscure source masculinity and form.

The final governing statement is short enough to remember and precise enough to control later examples: do not preserve masculine English where the Bible meant everyone, and do not remove masculine meaning where God placed it.

28 Gospel Invitation

The gospel close moves from universal offer to individual response. Romans 3:23 includes the whole human family in sin. John 6:37 offers assurance to the person who comes to Christ. The invitation includes every man and woman without teaching automatic salvation.

The prayer confesses sin, affirms Christ's death and resurrection and places faith in Christ alone. It ends in the name of Jesus.

29 Closing Application

The paragraphs after Amen preserve the required Reason Together pattern. Listeners are encouraged to read the KJV confidently while comparing responsible translations when a wording difference affects interpretation. Footnotes are treated as aids rather than signs of weakness.

The final lines return to accuracy, the church tagline and Aloha Nui Loa. The sermon therefore travels from Aloha to Aloha while ending with a practical commitment to careful Bible reading.