

the
NEW
TESTAMENT

THE FATHER'S LIFE
VERSION
(2nd EDITION)

**“A GRAIN OF WHEAT” MINISTRIES
PUBLICATION**

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VERSION
(2nd EDITION)

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PREFACE

This work of translation was begun with the purpose of clarifying the meaning of the word "life" as it is used in the New Testament. In English, the word "life" has so many meanings, covering an enormous spectrum of human experience, that it means at the same time almost everything and almost nothing specific.

For example, when someone asks, "How's your life going?" they could mean "How's your health?", "How are your finances?", "How are you emotionally?", "How is your work?", "How's your family?", and almost innumerable other things. Yet the Greeks were more precise in their vocabulary concerning what we know as "life." They used several different words to express specific aspects of what our word "life" means.

One of the most important of these Greek words is the word ΖΩË, which the writers of the New Testament used almost exclusively to refer to God's uncreated life. This translator considers this distinction extremely important and therefore began this translation as a means to highlight this truth as it appears in the scriptures.

In essence, when the New Testament refers to "eternal life," it is not referring to our own life at all but to the life of God, who is eternal. Where this new translation is most evident is in the gospel of John.

In the process of translation, other interesting and important meanings of other words, phrases, and even entire verses came to light as well, which the reader will discover as he or she reads through the text.

As a basis or point of beginning for this translation, the ASV or American Standard Version of 1901 was used. The first step was to modernize the language of that work to harmonize with today's English. Those who compare this translation with that one may notice a very few verses which passed without any change at all.

Next, research was done into the meanings of words and phrases which stood out to the translator. Many indi-

vidual words and phrases were compared with interlinear Greek texts, the definitions in Strong's concordance, the work of W. E. Vine in his *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, and about 40 other English translations by a great variety of translators. One website which was found to be very helpful was www.studybible.info.

No perfect translation of the New Testament exists. This effort is no exception to that fact. It is impossible for the opinions of any translator not to enter into the text.

For example, most Greek words have several (in some cases as many as twenty or more) possible translations. Any translator must choose his words from these possibilities.

But it is obvious that he will choose words which harmonize with his understanding of the Bible. It is impossible that he would select words for his text which disagree with his mindset and doctrine. Thus, the human element in translation is unavoidable.

This translation is the product of trying to balance two objectives: keeping the text as literal as possible while making it actually mean something in the English language.

With this in mind, an effort was made by this translator to make the New Testament understandable. He feels that in order to be of value, the words of the text must mean something and not be merely familiar "religious" words strung together in a grammatically correct way but which do not transmit any understanding.

To achieve this end, words were often added to the translation. These words appear in *italics*. Such words are those which are implied by the context but represent no words in the original Greek text. This practice is common in many New Testament translations.

Sometimes the "context" which this translator has chosen is not just that of one particular verse but that of the book or section of the book in which the verse appears. Very rarely, the "context" is taken from the New Testament as a whole. An example of this would be the word "one" found in Matthew 27:44 and Mark 15:32 which the translator has taken from Luke 23:39-43.

Occasionally, the translator added words which represent his own ideas and opinions but which are not implied by the Greek text. Such words are enclosed in brackets, like this []. The reader should understand these words as merely opinion.

In contrast to this, the words in these braces { } indicate legitimate, alternative translations or explanations. Words within parentheses () are part of the original Greek text and are often used in other New Testament translations also.

Most of the verses herein are translated very literally according to the Greek text. Yet, as a result of the translator's effort to make the text understandable, a few verses ended up being more like a paraphrase of the original.

This is because the Greek text can be rather sparse and compact, leaving out some implied thoughts or understanding. In some cases, whole connecting thoughts are left out of a discourse. In these cases, the translator has added words in *italics* or in brackets [] for clarity.

The reader should be aware that this translation work was not undertaken without a healthy dose of the fear of the Lord and a sincere effort to accurately transmit the pure revelation of God. Yet, without a doubt, due to the translator's desire to transmit understanding, it is possible that some verses miss the mark or even obscure other possible interpretations. Because of this risk, it is likely that this work does contain some such imperfections.

However, the translator felt that it was more important to communicate than to fear error. If this were the only translation available, perhaps the risk would be greater. But due to the proliferation of translations and other helps available to the English-reading student of the New Testament, it was felt that the danger of misleading the Christian public with this one small offering was slight.

In some cases, especially in the writings of Paul, the New Testament authors often write long sentences with many subordinate clauses and phrases which continue without any pauses, thus making it difficult to grasp the meaning. Too often when a sentence goes on and on, changing subjects four or five times, the reader tires, loses

focus, and misses some important revelation. To combat this, this translator has broken these giant sentences up into more manageable segments and added a few “introductory” words at the beginning of each new sentence to keep the continuity of the message. Such words are placed in *italics*. This may be most noticeable in the first chapter of Ephesians.

An effort was made by this translator to avoid some common words which appear in most New Testament translations which are really “transliterations” and not translations at all. A transliteration occurs when you take a Greek word and transform it into an English one thus creating a new English word.

Some examples of such words are “apostle” and “deacon.” Such non-translations frequently recall to the readers’ minds a set of preconceived ideas which are not necessarily in harmony with the Greek text, other passages of the New Testament, or the thoughts of God.

To counter this problem, the translator has used actual translations of these words in place of transliterations. For example, “apostle” now reads “sent ones” and “deacon” becomes “servant.” These are the actual meanings of these Greek words. While at first this terminology may be new to the reader, he or she will find that with time, these translations become normal and even enlightening in their respective contexts.

Another essential term which came into more focus during this translation was the word “Christ.” To believers, this is a very important and even sacred word.

Unfortunately, to many in the English speaking world it has become merely a swearword. In fact, it is one of the most common words used for cursing in our society, resulting in a denigration of this Name which, on the contrary, should command our reverence.

The actual translation of this Greek word “CHRISTOS” is “the Anointed One” which, as well as conveying important meaning for us, also sidesteps today’s irreverent usage of the word. Therefore, this translator thought it important to use this translation in the text.

It seems as if “and” was a very popular word in ancient Greek. Since there is no punctuation or division of sentences in the original Greek, perhaps this word was used as a way to divide sentences. The result is that very many of the verses in the New Testament begin with “and,” especially in the gospels. To avoid tedium and repetition, this translator has changed some of these to “Yet,” “But,” “So,” “Then,” and “When” when it seemed appropriate and did not affect the meaning of the sentence.

In an effort to constantly improve this text, input from the readers in the form of ideas, suggestions, opinions and even corrections will be accepted. However, the translator refuses as of now, and will continue to refuse in the future, to become involved in arguments, debates, acrimonious discussions, etc. If your contribution is helpful, that’s good. If you have a bone to pick and want to fight about some particular dogma, doctrine, or position, your input is already rejected. Nothing of that sort is edifying to anyone. Don’t bother to become involved.

This translation should not be considered as a completely finished work but as a work in progress. Without a doubt as time goes on and the translator receives suggestions, thoughts, ideas, and more revelation, the text will undergo some changes. However, these modifications will probably be minor ones and such a possibility should not hinder the reader from extracting the maximum benefit possible from this present translation.

After committing this version to print, any changes which are made afterwards will be placed online where the readers can consult them. These new changes will then be included in later printed editions.

It is the prayer of this translator that everyone who reads this text will find edification, revelation, and a deeper relationship with our God and Savior, Jesus Christ {the Anointed One}.

David W. Dyer