

Definition of Words Part 2

... the meaning of words

Continuing with the topic of dangers in
root word/word studies,
let's ask a very important question,

“How do we know what words in the Bible REALLY mean?”

We come to the problem of

A ROOT WORD/WORD STUDY with incorrect definitions

*Root
Word/WORD
STUDY with
incorrect
definitions*

When we read a translation today that is still using words from the 1500's through the 1900's, there is a huge possibility that we are not using the correct definitions for those words.

Fortunately for English-speaking people, if a **COMMITTEE DEVELOPED** Bible is used, the committee has made every attempt to provide the correct English word(s) that coincide with the original meaning of the Hebrew and Greek word(s) taking into account the original culture, geography, language, dialects, colloquialisms, and traditions of the Israelites from about 1500 BC – 30 A.D. and the Church from about 30 A.D. to 96 A.D. in order to provide a version that attempts to rightfully transmit the LORD's intended message.

What is a committee Bible? Here are the current popular ones in use.

**King James
Version**

First published in 1611 at the request of King James I of England. He made it the authorized version for the Church of England. The last update is called the **NEW KING JAMES VERSION 1982**. Placed in the rhythm of the speech patterns of the Shakespearian age, it is a poetical revision of the **Bishop's Bible 1572**, a word-for-word version, which was a revision of the **Great Bible 1539**. The NKJV 1982 was the basis for the **Holman Christian Standard Version 2004**. They all attempt to be a word-for-word version (A word-for-word versions is called **formal equivalence**).

**American
Standard
Version**

Published in 1901 in America; begun in 1871. Basically, it was a revision of the King James Version. It became the primary Bible of the Jehovah's Witness because "Jehovah" was used in place of "LORD." It was the basis for the **Revised Standard Version (RSV) 1971**, **New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) 1989**, **New American Standard Version (NASV) 1971 and 1995**, and the **English Standard Bible (ESV) 2001** (based on **RSV 1971** - philosophically neo-Calvinistic). All are an attempt to present a word-for-word revision of a previous English version. They are not new/modern translations; they are revisions or what we call versions.

**New
International
Version**

Published in 1978. It is an attempt to provide a modern Bible in a thought-for-thought version (A thought for thought version is called **functional equivalence**).

Obviously, a non-committee Bible translation is a version created by an individual such as the **J.B. Phillips' *New Testament*** 1958, **Eugene H. Peterson's *The Message*** 1993-2002, **Kenneth N. Taylor's *The Living Bible*** 1971. These versions are the works of individuals and reflect their personal views and interpretation philosophies. These versions often lend insight but may not reflect an accurate, academic rendering of the original.

LET'S LOOK AT A FAVORITE VERSE OF ALL CHRISTIANS AND CULTS ALIKE!

JOHN 3:16

Look for the differences in these seven committee versions and one individual but literal translation. Remember, the committee works are revisions of previous English manuscripts; however, *Young's Literal Translation* is his private work taken from the best Greek copies available at the time of his endeavor.

<p>King James Bible For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.</p>	<p>American Standard Version For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life.</p>	<p>New American Standard Bible For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.</p>	<p>English Standard Version For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.</p>
<p>International Standard Version For this is how God loved the world: He gave his unique Son so that everyone who believes in him might not be lost but have eternal life.</p>	<p>New International Version For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.</p>	<p>Holman Christian Standard Bible For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.</p>	<p>Young's Literal Translation for God did so love the world, that His Son -- the only begotten -- He gave, that every one who is believing in him may not perish, but may have life age-during.</p>

Four verses use the word "begotten."

The *King James*, *American Standard*, *New American Standard* and *Young's Literal* say basically the same thing. **Why does Young's place the word "Son" before "only begotten?"** In Greek, the adjective comes after the noun; Young translated his text in the same word order as the original. The three committee Bibles placed the adjective before the noun as in English grammar.

Two verses use the words "one and only."

The *New International* and the *Holman* add the word "one" to "only." Why? Where did they get that word? Is it in the original Greek? **Yes and no! What does it mean?** What happened to the word "begotten?" Do we have a problem in the interpretation of the English text? **YES!** It is the point of this lesson!

One verse uses the word “only.”

The *English Standard Version* left off the “**begotten**” and “**one**” leaving just “**only**.”
What’s going on? Which is right?

One verse uses the word “unique.”

The *International Standard Version* uses the word “**unique**.” What happened to “**begotten, one and only**?” Why is this version so different?

Which version is right? **ALL OF THEM!**



BIG RED FLAG FOR ALL NON-HEBREW/GREEK SPEAKING BIBLE STUDENTS

We have discussed at length the problem with trying to translate the original Hebrew or Greek into English. You do not have to be a Hebrew/Greek scholar to recognize potentially mistranslated passages in the English versions. A person preparing to teach a lesson or discuss a passage should read and compare every word of the text being considered in many various translations. When we run across a situation like that in John 3:16 in which a certain phrase or set of words is translated in such different and confusing ways, we have encountered a verse with which the translation committees struggled to find the right words for an accurate, common sense rendering. Additionally, when a translation has become a favorite of multiple generations of people, it is difficult for the committees to make even the most minor changes that need to be made in certain special, favorite, admired, beloved verses such as John 3:16.

Why is there such a discrepancy in the translation of John 3:16 today? Through the years, definitions of words have changed. Words matter! When William Tyndale published the first English Bible in 1525 A.D., the plain common sense English words of the Holy Writ were immediately understandable to the English-speaking people who, for the most part, lived under the religious domain of the Catholic Church. When Henry VIII received a copy of the English version, it gave him fuel to bolster his break with the Catholic Church and form the Church of England. However, prior to that break, Tyndale was on the run for his life. Despite England’s attempt to save him and the intercession on his behalf by Thomas Cromwell, Tyndale was betrayed by Henry Phillips and taken into custody near Brussels. He was tried on a charge of heresy in 1536 and condemned to death. He was strangled to death and then his body was burnt at the stake in October of 1536. His last words were, “LORD! Open the King of England’s eyes.” Words matter so much that Tyndale gave his life for the words he used in the first English translation of the Bible. And so, within four years, his prayer was answered. His Bible translation was published in England on the order of the king.

Tyndale had used the correct words for his time and audience intended by the original text. Those words are now incorrect for the context and are being used by the false teachers of our day for their own political, theological and monetary gain.

The words of Tyndale became the favorite of the English-speaking people. With the publishing of his Bible and all those renditions that followed, some words were so favored that the new committees dared not change them. With the first King James Version of 1611 truly based on Tyndale's work, words were locked in the text. In 1750 A.D., a major updating of the King James Version was completed but 200-year-old words of certain passages could not be changed for fear of being deemed heretical and the committees would face the same fate as Tyndale. Until 1967 A.D., the King James left most of the 1750 words intact although some publishers were willing to make changes in copies published under the names of some famous and beloved pastors such as Scofield and Ryrie. But the KJV committee did not make major updates to the words that best fit the original intent of God's WORD until 1967. Other versions were well on their way by then including the New American Standard, New Revised Standard and the New International Version. A century before the laws of America and England had settled in protecting the committees from the threat of criminal charges for a version they might produce, printing a book was still expensive and it made no sense to print something that would not sell to the masses. By the 1970's, the cost of printing was dropping and such changes in words did not carry such liability. Thus, the multiple translations we looked at above were being created and the confusion of the text readily pops out for those who are not Hebrew/Greek literate.

What should we do when we notice a passage with so many different variations across the versions?

1. Be honest with the passage and anyone with whom you are speaking! You do not have to have the answer about every passage. Don't make up an answer!
2. Seek the help of Bible scholars who can help you find the true intent of the original. Realize they might not know the answer immediately, but surely, they will be able to help you find the answer.

Why the differences in John 3:16?

The problem stems from the original use of the word "only begotten" by Tyndale and what it meant before the 1500's versus what it meant in 1611, 1750 and today.

monogenace

The Greek word that was translated "only begotten" was *monogenace*.

It is a compound word made up of *mono* meaning *remaining, sole, single, alone, only, by themselves*. (With the emphasis that it is one of kind or unique. i.e. There was never one like this before and there will never be one like this in the future.)

Its second part in the word is *genace* meaning *be, come to pass, be made, be done, come, become*.

But REMEMBER, rarely does a compound Greek word carry the full meaning of the definitions of the two words used. The Greek word was formed in order to establish a new word with a new definition.

Do you remember the *Online Etymology Dictionary* that we introduced on page 24? It is time to use it again because we are looking at the words Tyndale used, not the Greek!

Why did Tyndale use the words “only begotten?”

only

“Only” is the easy one. It comes from the first part of the Greek compound word *monogenace*. *Mono*, means “only” to indicate that there will never be another like Jesus. He is one of a kind, unique. The *Online Etymology Dictionary* says the following.

only (adj.)

Old English *ænlic*, *anlic* "only, unique, solitary," literally "one-like," from an "one" (see [one](#)) + *-lic* "-like" (see [-ly](#) (1)). It preserves the old pronunciation of one.

begotten

“Begotten” is a little more difficult. It is an English compound word used for the last part of the Greek (compound) word *genace*. Using one English compound word for one Greek word compounds the English translation problem. Therefore, we must look at both parts of the English compound words of “be” and “gotten.” The *Online Etymology Dictionary* says the following.

be (v.)

Old English *beon*, *beom*, *bion* "be, exist, come to be, become, happen," from Proto-Germanic **biju-* "[I am](#), [I will be](#)." This "b-root" is from PIE root **bheue-* "to be, exist, grow," and in addition to the words in English it yielded German present first and second person singular (*bin*, *bist*, from Old High German *bim* "[I am](#)," *bist* "[thou art](#)"), Latin perfective tenses of *esse* (*fui* "[I was](#)," etc.), Old Church Slavonic *byti* "be," Greek *phu-* "become," Old Irish *bi'u* "[I am](#)," Lithuanian *bu'ti* "to be," Russian *byt'* "to be," etc.

gotten

a past participle form of [get](#), showing vestiges of the Old English form of the verb. With adverbs, "obtained or acquired" (in some specified manner) from mid-14c.

get (v.)

c. 1200, from Old Norse *geta* (past tense *gatum*, past participle *getenn*) "to obtain, reach; to be able to; to beget; to learn; to be pleased with," a word of very broad meaning, often used almost as an auxiliary verb, also frequently in phrases (such as *geta rett* "to guess right"). This is from Proto-Germanic **getan* (source also of Old Swedish *gissa* "to guess," literally "to try to get"), from PIE root **ghend-*, also **ghed-* "seize, take" (source also of Greek *khandanein* "to hold, contain," Lithuanian *godetis* "be eager," second element in Latin *prehendere* "to grasp, seize," Welsh *gannu* "to hold, contain," Russian *za-gadka* "riddle," Albanian *gjen* "to find").

Old English, as well as Dutch and Frisian, had the verb almost exclusively in compounds (such as *begietan*, "to [beget](#);" *forgietan* "to [forget](#)").

Tyndale used the words “only begotten” because they had a special, plain common sense meaning in his day/culture which represented the intent of God’s WORD in John 3:16.

In his day, Tyndale’s translation of John 3:16 meant the following to the people for whom he was translating.

For God so loved the world that He gave His “[only unique ‘I am’ obtainable](#)” Son that whosoever believes in Him would not perish but have eternal life!

By the 1700’s, the term “begotten” had acquired a new definition that heavily influenced an understanding and a theology that “begotten” meant **to give birth! Not so in Tyndale’s day!**

Wait! What about all the “begets” in the Old Testament? *It used begets!*

yalad

The Old Testament word for “beget,” as in Genesis chapter 5, is the Hebrew word *yalah* which plainly means **to bear** as with a child.

Well! What about all the “begets” in the New Testament? *It used begets!*

gennao

The New Testament word for “beget,” as in Matthew chapter 1, is the Greek word *gennao* which is a variation (let’s call it a cousin) of the word *genace* used in John 3:16. *Gennao* plainly means **to bear, procreate, conceive** as with a child.

***Gennao* means to bear a child!**

***Genace* does not mean to bear a child!**

So, what about the word “Son” in John 3:16?

Doesn’t that word indicate that Jesus was a child born to God?

The concept of “the Son” is rare in the Old Testament; yet, it is plainly there in some of the favorite passages of all time!

We have the famous Isaiah passages.

Therefore, the **LORD** Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel. *Isaiah 7:14*

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. *Isaiah 9:6*

Lastly, there are the two passages from Psalms.

I will surely tell of the decree of the **LORD**: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. *Psalms 2:7*

Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish *in* the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him! *Psalms 2:12*

*The Old Testament clearly tells us that the “Son”
will one day come to live on earth!*

If we were to expand the context of the Isaiah and Psalms passages, we would notice that both are being spoken by the **LORD Himself, the One Who will come as the Child!**

The LORD's Earthly Name and Title

Name

In Luke 1:31 we find that when the angel told Mary that she would have a son, he also told her that His name would be **Jesus!**

And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus.

Note: Jesus (Jee' zuhss) is the Greek form of Joshua which means "Yahweh is salvation" or "Jehovah the Savior."

Title

In the very next verse, Luke 1:32, we find that Jesus will be called "the Son of the Most High" and in Luke 1:35 He will be called "the Son of God."

He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David;

The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God."

Obviously, Jesus' everyday name was not going to be "the Son of the Most High" or "the Son of God." These two are titles which are in essence the same title with the same meaning and they were meant to express a plain common sense earthly picture of one of the three persons of the GODHEAD. The Bible also speaks of these three Persons with the titles **GOD THE FATHER, GOD THE SON and GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT**. In the original culture of the Old and New Testaments, the title "Son of God" did not indicate a biological relationship as with a son to a father. To impose a biological relationship, or even the thought of Jesus being the first creation of God the Father and therefore His Son is a western way of thinking pressed on a title clearly understood in the eastern mindset in a different way. To the eastern mind of the Jew, the title "Son of God" meant that Jesus WAS GOD Who had come to earth. When the Jewish leadership questioned Jesus, Matthew recorded the following.

Matthew 26:63-64 But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, "I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, **the Son of God.**" Jesus said to him, "You have said it *yourself.*"

To the Jewish leadership, Jesus was CLAIMING TO BE GOD by affirming the title *the Son of God* belonged to Him.

When the Jewish leaders were attempting to convince Pilate why Jesus should be put to death, John recorded the following.

John 19:7 The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be **the Son of God.**"

To the Jews, when a man claimed to be the Son of God, that was blasphemy!

Abbreviated Title

Throughout the New Testament, the title Son of God is often abbreviated "the Son." Here is one example (for the sake of time and space).

John 3:36 "He who believes in **the Son** has eternal life; but he who does not obey **the Son** will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

Now Let's Look at John 3:16 Again!

Greek Interlinear – A WONDERFUL RESOURCE from Biblehub.com

Οὕτως	γάρ	ἠγάπησεν	ὁ	Θεός	τὸν	κόσμον	ὥστε	τὸν	Υἱὸν	τὸν
thus	indeed	loved	(the)	God	the	world	that	the	Son	the
μονογενῆ	ἔδωκεν	ἵνα	πᾶς	ὁ	πιστεύων	εἰς	αὐτὸν	μὴ	ἀπόληται	ἀλλ
only begotten	He gave	that	every one	(the)	believing	in	him	not	should perish	but
ἔχῃ	ζωὴν	αἰώνιον								
might have	life	eternal								

Everyone usually knows John 3:16 in the King James Version. It reads,

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Do you see the word that was added in the King James Version that was not in the Greek? If you do not see it, look back in this lesson (page 28), to the eight versions of John 3:16 and notice the **BOLD, UNDERLINED** word in **GREEN** in each version!

Now! Look back at the Greek interlinear above. Where is that word in the Greek Interlinear? It is not there!

Jesus was speaking to Nicodemus in the John 3:16 passage. Jesus did not use the words **“HIS SON”**; He said, **“the Son.”** It was His title, not His relationship to God (as if it was a Father/Son Relationship)!

This one-word addition to this verse (and many others) has caused many theological differences!

Here are eight examples! Can you identify ours?

<p>Jesus the Only God God and Jesus are the same persons. When we speak about the Father, it is Jesus acting like a father. When we speak of the Son, it is Jesus acting like a son.²⁰</p>	<p>Spirit Creature God made many spirit creatures and Jesus was selected to help with creation. Jesus is considered a lesser god.²¹</p>	<p>One of God's Sons God has many sons and Jesus was the first son He created. Jesus then created everything else. Jesus is one of many gods.²²</p>	<p>One of God's Prophets God has many sons and Jesus is one of them. He is one of God's chosen prophets along with Abraham, Moses, and Muhammad.²³</p>
<p>Example of How to become God Jesus an example for all to become like him, a god.²⁴</p>	<p>Operating Thetan Jesus was a man who was not particularly enlightened but aware of his true nature.²⁵</p>	<p>Inheritor of Hebrew Prophet Traditions Example of the supremacy of human agency and the model for human struggle.²⁶</p>	<p>The Second Person of the Godhead God, with the Father and the Spirit, co-equal, co-eternal, one in nature.²⁷</p>

On to Definition of Words Part 3 – “First Born”

²⁰ Pentecostal Church

²¹ Jehovah's Witness

²² Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

²³ Islam

²⁴ Yoga, Hindu and Buddhism

²⁵ Scientology

²⁶ Unitarian Universalist

²⁷ Christianity – Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Episcopal, Salvation Army, etc.