

The goal of any Bible translator should be to accurately represent what the original Greek or Hebrew text says. The challenge is balancing being literal and being fluent. Some translators try to translate almost word for word. The result is a translation which sounds choppy and is somewhat more difficult to read. Others try to translate into nice, flowing English. While this is easy to read, it means the translator had to put more of his own interpretation into the translation.

The following are examples of translations which achieve a balance between being literal and being fluent. This list includes some which use older English and some which use modern English. It is not an exhaustive list.

John 3:16,17

THE 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. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”

THE REVISED 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. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.”

THE NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. “For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him.”

THE KING JAMES VERSION

“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. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”

THE NEW AMERICAN TRANSLATION

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through Him.”