

Go Ahead And Ask 2

Genesis 1:27, 1:28; Hebrews 2:7, 9:27; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Galatians 4:4. 3:19, 6:6; Mark 2:22, 22:18-19; Romans 1:8

June 17, 2020

1. How should Christians respond to the issue of gender confusion in America?

Answer

My answer is to always spring from the authority of the Word of God. The Bible is a book of absolute, non-negotiable, clear cut truth on virtually all issues of life. And it is very clear on how God created us either male or female. We note here that God specifically mentions two things about us. One, we are created in His image. None other of the created creatures was given this honor—to be created in God’s image. This does NOT mean, however, that we are “little gods.”

Bible Verse

Genesis 1:27 (NIV)

²⁷So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

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Custom

The phrase “made in the image of God” refers not to the physical body because “God is spirit” said Jesus. We are like God in that we have a soul/spirit that sets us apart from animals and makes us just a little lower than God’s other glorious creation, the angels (Hebrews 2:7).

Bible Verse

Hebrews 2:7 (NIV)

⁷You made them a little lower than the angels; you crowned them with glory and honor

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Answer

We note here that God specifically mentions two things about us. One, we are created in His image. None other of the created creatures was given this honor—to be created in God’s image. This does NOT mean, however, that we are “little gods.” The phrase “made in the image of God” refers not to the physical body because “God is spirit” said Jesus. We are like God in that we have a soul/spirit that sets us apart from animals and makes us just a little lower than God’s other glorious creation, the angels.

We are like God on a limited scale in our ability to reason, think, meditate, conceptualize, plan, and speak. Animals will never look in a mirror and ask, “Where did I come from?” “Why am I here?” “I need to lose some weight!” “What do I want to do with my life?” No. Animals are purely instinctual.

We are like God on a limited scale in that we have a spirit man that can fellowship with Him intimately. God is spirit and He created us with the ability to walk with Him in our spirit. Paul said in one place,

Bible Verse

2 Corinthians 13:14 (NIV)

¹⁴May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

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Answer

Then we note that Genesis says God made us male and female. He distinctly mentions the two genders. In mentioning them he also tells us why. “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it” (1:28). So God created mankind male and female for the purpose of marriage and multiplication. Two women or two men cannot do this. It goes directly against the divine order.

Bible Verse

Genesis 1:28 (NIV)

²⁸God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

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Answer

I don't pretend to personally know about the gender struggles some people experience. They say, "I'm a woman trapped in a man's body," and similar things. And today we have so departed from God that in some states we're allowing young elementary school aged children to decide whether they identify as a boy or a girl. If a boy says he identifies as a girl, the teachers are being forced to address them in that gender. This to my mind is child abuse and the worst kind of confusion. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to look at a newborn baby and discern whether it's a boy or girl! If I were personally struggling with this issue, it would be a great comfort to me to know that God made me the gender that I am and to work my gender identity out from there. So in short, gender confusion is answered by the clear and wonderful clarity of Scripture, which reveals God's created plan and purpose for the genders.

2. There are people that say they die and go to heaven, but get sent back to earth. How is this possible if the Bible says we are to die only once and then judgment?

Answer

This statement from Hebrews which reads, "And it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment" (Heb 9:27) is a fact for all mankind. Everyone dies. We don't come back as something else per the false teaching of reincarnation. Having died we face the judgment. This is not negated by the experience of some who, for whatever reason, die and are brought back. Lazarus died and was brought back by the resurrection power of Christ Jesus. In fact, 3 people in the OT and 5 in the NT

were resurrected. These rare events still do not negate the universal principle for us all that we will die and face God.

Bible Verse

Hebrews 9:27 (NIV)

²⁷Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,

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3. Roman's 5:6 says: "For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly." Why was that point in history the right time for Christ to die?

Answer

Paul the Apostle repeats the same thing in Galatians 4:4:

Bible Verse

Galatians 4:4 (NIV)

⁴But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

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Answer

More than anything else, it was the "right time" because it was THE time God the Father chose to send His Son. It was neither too soon nor too late, but in that very point of time which the wisdom of God knew to be more proper than any other, He sent His Son. We might look back in history and see many reasons for why it was the "right time" for Jesus to be born.

First, it was the time when all the prophecies regarding His first coming as the Babe born in Bethlehem were fulfilled and there could be no doubt about their fulfillment.

Secondly, the world had had ample time to see its need of a Savior. Man had tried in every way to become right with God through religion and had abysmally failed. They were ready for grace, not law! This is why Paul writes in Galatians,

Bible Verse

Galatians 3:19 (NIV)

¹⁹Why, then, was the law given at all? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was given through angels and entrusted to a mediator.

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Answer

Third, because of the vastness of Rome and the superiority of Roman roads, it was a perfect time for the spreading of the gospel throughout the land once Jesus ascended back to heaven. So, in hindsight we can see these and many other reasons that it was the “right time,” but ultimately it was God Himself in His infinite wisdom that decided on the timing.

4. Has anyone noticed that certain Bibles are changing words? A Bible was recently gifted to me that has different words than my old bible. I have many examples but one example is in Mark 2:22. The new bible changed the word "wineskins" to "bottles". Does that not change the whole meaning? Another person asks a similar question. “What do you think about the Passion Translation? It seems to change a lot of words and says things not found in my other Bible?”

Answer

Ok, both questions come to the issue of Bible translation. Before I comment further, I want to read a warning from the book of Revelation:

Bible Verse

Revelation 22:18-19 (NIV)

¹⁸I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll.

¹⁹And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll.

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Answer

So, here is a clear warning from God to anyone handling the Word of God, including Bible translators. Don't add to it, and don't take away from it. Keep this in mind as we move ahead. The OT was originally written in Hebrew and the NT was written in Greek. The reason that some words may change from translation to translation rests at the feet of the translators themselves. The job of a translator is to take the original language and translate the Hebrew or Greek into another language, say English. They must search for the English words that best give the meaning of the Hebrew or Greek words.

Illustration

For instance, here is a simple example:

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος, καὶ ὁ Λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ Λόγος.

In beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word.

Answer

As a translator, your job is to translate as faithfully as you can what the writer originally wrote, nothing more, nothing less! With the good translations we have like the KJV, NKJV, NASB, ESV, NLT and so on, a team of translators came together who were highly proficient in Hebrew and Greek. At least 60 men were involved in translating the KJV. A 130 person team translated the NKJV, including Greek, Hebrew, and English scholars, editors, church leaders, and Christian laity. Altogether it took seven years to produce. More than fifty men with earned doctorates in Biblical languages worked on the translation of the NASB. The story is the same for any

good Bible translation. Together they worked on the translation, and in mutual agreement produced their work. And sometimes in order to translate a Greek word into English, they chose a word English speaking people might better understand, like exchanging “wineskin” into “bottles.” And yes, for the record, I don’t think that was a great choice. But it doesn’t damage the original meaning so badly that it’s heretical or ruins the writer’s intent.

Which brings us to the Passion Translation. First, the PT is not a translation at all. It is written by primarily one man, Brian Simmons, who claims that in 2009, Jesus Christ literally visited him in his room, breathed on him, and commissioned him to write a new translation of the Bible. Simmons said in an interview, “It felt like Heaven’s wind. The rock, the breath, the wind of God came upon me. And he (God) spoke to me and said, ‘I’m commissioning you to translate the Bible into the translation project that I’m giving you to do.’ And he promised that he would help me, and he promised me that he would give me secrets of the Hebrew language.” Simmons claims that, by blowing on him, Jesus gave him “the spirit of revelation.” He claims: “he breathed on me so that I would do the project, and I felt downloads coming, instantly. I received downloads. It was like, I got a chip put inside of me. I got a connection inside of me to hear him better, to understand the scriptures better and hopefully to translate.”

Ok, this is problematic on so many levels.

First, he mentions “secrets in the Hebrew language.” What could that mean? We have men and women with earned doctorates in Bible languages who can assure us there are no “secrets” of the Hebrew language. You either know it or you don’t.

Second, he’s basing his “translation” on “downloads” from heaven. In other words, this is not a translation work. It is a personal “revelation” work. This is what Joseph Smith of the Mormons and Mohammad of Islam claimed to be the way they received the Book of Mormon and the Koran—personal revelation. There’s no team of translators involved here. No group of skilled linguists. Just one man. He later claimed that he did have help but never gives the names or qualifications of the helpers.

Let’s look at an example of the PT ‘translation’ compared to others. Consider Simmon’s translation of Galatians 6:6. In the KJV it reads:

Bible Verse

Galatians 6:6 (KJV)

⁶Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

Answer

The word “communicate” is translated from a Greek word meaning “to share” (as translated in other English translations as well). It is about sharing material things with those whose full time job is to teach the Word of God. Compare this to the Passion Translation:

“And those who are taught the Word will receive an impartation from their teacher; a transference of anointing takes place between them.” This has nothing to do with the meaning of the verse or the Greek text. There is no mention of a “transference of anointing, or importation from a teacher” in the original Greek text. The original Greek says it is fitting that teachers should be helped by their students, as much as they are able, with things necessary for their subsistence. But the PT turns it on its head and makes it about the teacher imparting anointing to the student. So, the PT adds to the Bible something that was never there! And it’s that way all throughout the PT. Sometimes, entire clauses are inserted for no obvious reason.

So, in Rom 1:8, the NKJV says, “First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

Bible Verse

Romans 1:8 (NIV)

⁸First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world.

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Answer

The PT renders it: “I give thanks to God for all of you, because it’s through your conversion to Jesus Christ, that you are becoming well known. For the testimony of your strong, persistent faith is spreading throughout the world.” Where on earth does this lengthy insertion come from? It’s not in the original. Period.

Bible scholar Dr. Andrew Wilson writes, “The Passion ‘translation’ inserts all kinds of concepts, words and ideas of which the original gives no hint whatsoever.”

Old Testament scholar and NIV Translation Committee member Dr. Andrew Sheard is even stronger: “TPT is not a Bible....abandoning all interest in textual accuracy, playing fast and loose with the original languages, and inserting so much new material into the text that it is at least 50% longer than the original. The result is a strongly sectarian translation that no longer counts as Scripture.”

In closing, what you want for your daily Bible study is a good, solid, faithful translation of Scripture. Again, the NASB, KJV, NKJV, NLT, ESV, are some translations you can be confident in.

