



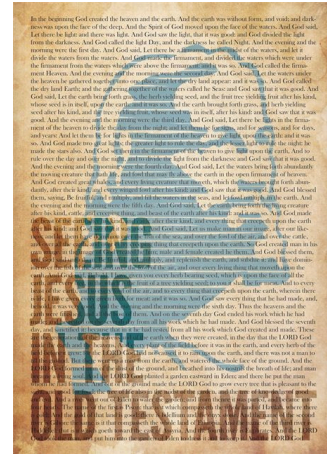
CONCORDIA
BIBLE INSTITUTE
Christ in Every Word

CBI e-Bulletin February 2025

Welcome to this month's edition of the Concordia Bible Institute (CBI) e-Bulletin!

Continue reading for Dr. German's take on the best English-language Bible translations, details on an in-depth Bible Study in Sheboygan this month, our latest Bible-in-a-year calendar, and more!

CBI exists to provide Christ-centered Bible instruction through distinguished experts who teach "Christ in Every Word" of the Old and New Testaments. Under the direction of Dr. Brian German and in cooperation with the Department of Theology at Concordia University Wisconsin, CBI offers podcasts, face-to-face seminars, and other special events to strengthen faith and spread belief in the one true God. If your congregation would like to host a seminar, please reach out to us at Concordia.Bible@cuw.edu.



"For the whole Christ is in every word and wholly in each individual word. When He is denied, therefore, in one word, He is totally denied, for He is in every word."

-Martin Luther (*Luther's Works*, 25:238).

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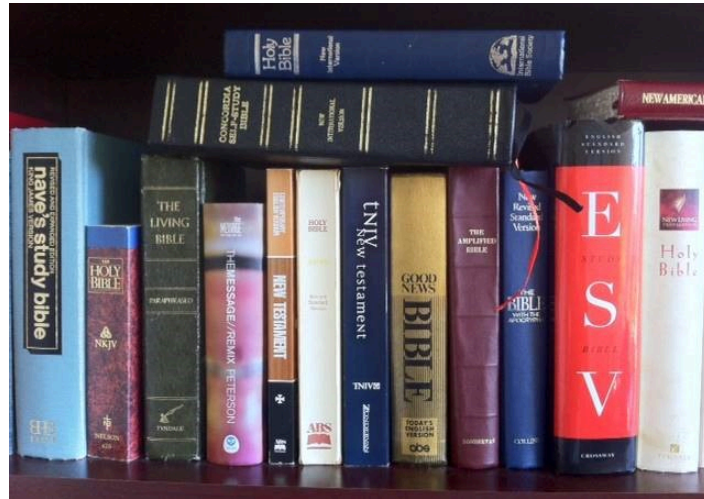
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Which Version of the Bible Should I Use?

Question: “There are so many Bible translations to pick from and they all seem to have their pros/cons. ... I wanted to reach out for advice on great Bible translations Lutherans should be reading?”

You have quite a can of worms there! The translation of the Bible from the original Hebrew/Aramaic (Old Testament) and the Greek (New Testament) throughout the centuries is a fascinating but complex topic. Already within the Bible itself you can find various translations provided (e.g., “...he said to her, ‘Talitha cumi,’ *which means, ‘Little girl, I say to you, arise’*” [Mk. 5:41]), and from ancient times the church has recognized how vital it is to get the Bible translated into as many languages as possible for the spread of the Gospel.

While there are many, many factors that go into any given translation, *in general*, most modern English translations tend to find themselves on something of a spectrum between *accuracy* and *understandability*. Should a translation strive to be as literal (“wooden”) as possible in order to showcase the original Hebrew/Greek, or should we render that old Hebrew/Greek into a more modern, “dynamic equivalent” translation? Should we shoot for a middle road between these two poles?

Let me illustrate this by taking a close look at just the second half of Genesis 3:15, a hugely important verse. A very literal translation of the Hebrew would be: “He/It will strike of you head, and you will strike of him heel.”

First you may be thinking that “bruise of you head” sounds pretty clunky, so why not simply render it as “bruise *your* head” instead? Ok, let’s go with that, but by doing so, we’ve taken a tiny step away from literalness for the sake of clarity of expression. So,

how far are you willing to follow that principle?

The NIV renders the phrase, “he will *crush* your head, and you will *strike* his heel.” This is an interesting move, because *the Hebrew uses the same verb in both places (i.e., “strike...strike”).* So, should we take one *more* step away from literalness to drive home a *theological* point (i.e., that the coming Savior will *crush* the serpent’s head), as the NIV seems to have done here, or would you rather convey how the same Hebrew verb is used in both places, as the ESV, KJV, NASB, and many other versions have done by using the verb “strike” twice?

What makes things even more complicated is when a particular translation that might otherwise do some things rather well, ends up scattering in bits and pieces of liberal ideologies (e.g., by using gender-neutral terms for Hebrew/Greek words that are indeed gendered, or by construing certain “hot-button” passages away from traditional teachings about the sanctity of life, marriage, and so on).

I can’t come close to doing justice to the topic in this format, but speaking from my experience as a scholar and translator of the Bible, I’ll offer up the following, general reflections.

First, the ESV has been and continues to be near the top of my go-to list. If I had to give it a score out of 100, I’d give it something like a 97. No translation is perfect, but the ESV consistently gets an A whether I’m in the Old Testament or the New. In brief, I like how well it both showcases the original languages and maintains an impressive readability. The KJV is an incredible masterpiece and deserves much veneration, though its vocabulary just isn’t as accessible as it once was. (I should also mention that the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod has adopted the ESV for its latest study Bible and hymnal, so there’s also much to be said for reading and studying the same translation that you’ll be hearing and signing in church.)

The NRSV is also quite good in many respects and strikes its own nice balance between literalness and understandability, though I’d give it something like a 94. There are just a few too many instances where it comes up a bit short. For example, it renders Isaiah 7:14 as “the *young woman* is with child and shall bear a son,” instead of the far more common (and theologically accurate) “*virgin* will conceive and bear a son.” Many scholars continue to prefer the NRSV, though again, the ESV is a touch better.

Farther down the list would be the NIV, NLT, GNT, and other versions of the Bible that strive for a more “dynamic equivalent” translation. While I recognize that these continue to be extremely popular options, on the whole, there’s a bit too much paraphrasing going on, in ways that can quickly shift the theological tenor of the text. For example, it is well-known that the NIV intentionally strove for more gender-neutral language in its 2011 edition, and the same could be said about the NABRE, the official English translation of the Bible for the Catholic Church in the USA.

Again, this is a huge topic, and I’d be happy to take up more of it as the interest arises. Perhaps I’ll end with this. Whenever I pull up my Bible software, I have saved the Hebrew, the Greek, the Latin, and only a select number of English translations. At the top of the list is the ESV, but I also like to consult the KJV, the NRSV, the NAS, and sometimes also the NIV (usually for contrast). That, I think, gives a pretty good indication of Bible translations Lutherans could profitably be reading.

Dr. Brian German
Director of the Concordia Bible Institute

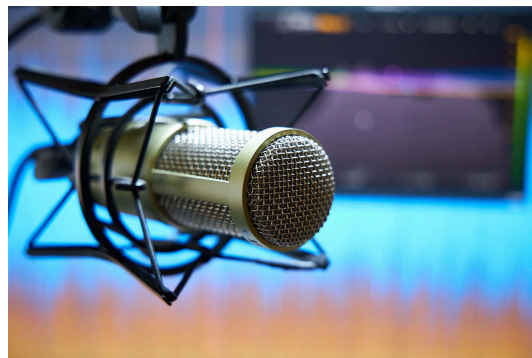


The Most Holy Matriarchs

Wise, worldly, or just plain wonderful? Come see some of the fascinating ways the women of Genesis teach us about the Christian life with Dr. Brian German

Dr. German will be giving presentations at Trinity Lutheran Church in Sheboygan, WI on three Tuesday evenings in **February: the 11th, 18th and 25th from 6:30-8:00pm**. No registration needed; join us for this FREE study!

For more details, visit concordiabible.org



Podcasts

Dr. German has been taking us through the book of Leviticus on his podcast. You can listen to our weekly podcasts by subscribing on iTunes, Google Play, or Spotify

When new episodes become available they will automatically be downloaded to your device. Just click [here](#) to subscribe through our website, or click the image below!

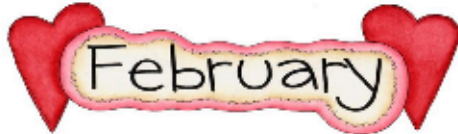



You can also catch up, or seek out other series, topics or books of the Bible, in the podcast archives on the [CBI website](#). CBI podcasts are around 30min each.

To browse by topic or book of the Bible, click [HERE](#); or, to browse stand-alone single podcasts, click [HERE](#).

Read the Bible in a Year

Do you have a goal to read the Bible in a year? Or simply looking to add to your devotions? Follow along with the calendar below. A new calendar will be sent in each newsletter. Start any time, and in a year you will have read through the entire Bible!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Luke 2:29-32 Exodus 1-3
2 Psalm 59 Exodus 4-6	3 Psalm 60 Exodus 7-9	4 Psalm 61 Exodus 10-12	5 Psalm 62 Exodus 13-15	6 Psalm 63 Exodus 16-18	7 Psalm 64 Exodus 19-21	8 Psalm 65 Exodus 22-24
9 Psalm 66 Exodus 25-27	10 Psalm 67 Exodus 28-30	11 Psalm 68 Exodus 31-33	12 Psalm 69 Exodus 34-36	13 Psalm 70 Exodus 37-38	14 Psalm 71 Exodus 39-40	15 Psalm 72 Leviticus 1-3
16 Psalm 73 Leviticus 4-6	17 Psalm 74 Leviticus 7-9	18 Psalm 75 Leviticus 10-12	19 Psalm 76 Leviticus 13-15	20 Psalm 77 Leviticus 16-18	21 Psalm 78 Leviticus 19-21	22 Psalm 79 Lev. 22-24
23 Psalm 80 Lev. 25-27	24 Psalm 81 Numbers 1-3	25 Psalm 82 Numbers 4-6	26 Psalm 83 Numbers 7-9	27 Psalm 84 Numbers 10-12	28 Luke 2:29-32 Numbers 13-15	

Archive Videos of Dr. Saleska Available



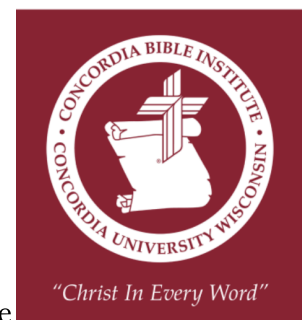
Videos from CBI archives continue to be gradually uploaded to the CBI website. These videos were taken from teaching by Dr. John Saleska and others, from as far back as 2001. You are welcome to view them at any time!

- Visit [here](#) to view all the videos we have available so far.
- Current teachings available include Dr. Saleska on Parables of the Kingdom, Christ Crucified Everywhere in Scripture, Baptism of the Holy Spirit, Do Miracles Still Happen?, and Prayer According to the Scriptures. The most recent series added was Luke: God's Saving Health for All Nations.
- **Adding This Month:** Romans: the Heart of God Opened

Concordia Bible Institute Endowment

CBI has established the Concordia Bible Institute Endowment fund for the purpose of maintaining and expanding CBI's ability to provide pastors and congregations of the Church with Christ-centered Bible instruction.

Please help spread the word about this endowment and pray for its growth. For ways to contribute and resources about this endowment, please visit concordiabible.org/contribute and designate "Concordia Bible Institute Endowment" on your method of giving.



Please contact Jeff Klocko, Director of Donor Relations, for details about this exciting opportunity. He can be reached at 262.243.2170 or jeff.klocko@cuw.edu.

Saleska Scholarship for Pre-Seminary Students

Please help Concordia University Wisconsin provide more financial aid to Pre-Seminary students by praying for and giving to the Saleska Scholarship Endowment. Gifts can be given by congregations, groups, and individuals.

- Visit concordiabible.org/Saleska for more information and to give (scroll down to the bottom of the page to see all of our resources).
- Help us get the word out to those who want to help Pre-Seminary students and to those who knew Dr. Saleska.
- Click here to watch our video: <https://youtu.be/vqL.fzI9Wlkw>

If you know someone who may be interested in the Pre-Seminary program at CUW, you may reach out to Dr. LaFeve, CUW's Pre-Seminary Director, at Joshua.LaFeve@cuw.edu.

Website

Visit our website at concordiabible.org to learn more about CBI.

Contribute

Concordia Bible Institute thrives because of generous supporters, like you! If you find value in this e-Bulletin and other CBI offerings and would like to support our mutual desire to spread God's Word to wide audiences, please consider making a contribution to CBI. There are many ways to contribute, from writing a check to **CUW Foundation** with **CBI e-Bulletin** on the memo line, to using the following link to make a one-time or recurring gift online: [Support Concordia Bible Institute](#).

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Concordia University Wisconsin
Attn: Office of Advancement
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Mequon, WI 53097

"Seeing Jesus in the Old Testament" photo courtesy of <http://www.prayercollege.org/tag/messiah>

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