



## DISCUSSION GUIDE

Lost in Translation – Part 1

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June 2, 2019

**Main Idea** – It is common for things in the Bible to be misquoted, or taken out of context. To prevent being subject to false teaching, we should be careful to closely read the entire circumstance from which Scripture is quoted. One way to ensure God’s involvement in your life is to submit yourself before Him with vulnerability, as His child.

### The crucial need for accuracy and context

- The Bible is sometimes taken out of context.
- Individual words and phrases can be lifted from the surrounding passages and seemingly made to say something not intended by the original writer.
- Occasionally, something that is actually unscriptural can be presented as truth because it sounds like something from the Bible.
- If you are not knowledgeable about what is actually in the Bible, you can easily be deceived into adopting a false mindset or philosophy.

### Some examples

- A quotation that is not found in the Bible, but can be understood as approximating a Biblical truth:
  - “This too shall pass” - Mike Ditka
  - **2 Corinthians 4: 17-18 – For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.**
- A quotation that sounds like it came from the Bible, but could possibly be unscriptural:
  - “God helps those who help themselves.” - Ben Franklin
  - **Romans 5:8 – But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**
- A passage so graphic one might find it hard to believe it actually came from the Bible:
  - **Judges 3:22 – Even the hilt went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the dagger out of his belly; and his entrails came out.**

- A pop culture quote that begins with a Biblical sentiment:
  - “Don’t hate the player. Hate the game.” Ice T
  - **Leviticus 19: 17-18 – Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord.**
- A Bible passage that is commonly miss-stated, even by mature Christians:
  - “Spare the rod and spoil the child.”
  - **Proverbs 13:24 – He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly.**

### Psalm 37:4

- **Psalm 37:4 – Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart.**
- There are two clauses in that verse. The second clause is dependent on the first. In order for God to give us the desires of our hearts, we first must have delighted in Him.
- In Hebrew, the word “delight” is “anag.” Anag is defined as: *to be soft or pliable, ie (figuratively) effeminate or luxurious – delicate(ness), weaken, pamper.*
- King David wrote Psalm 37:4. He was surely a masculine person, but was comfortable presenting himself before God with – what to him – would have been a child-like vulnerability.
- The Bible tells us David danced before God wearing a linen ephod – a type of light garment worn by priests. **2 Samuel 6:14 – Then David danced before the Lord with all his might; and David was wearing a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting and with the sound of the trumpet.**
- When it came to approaching God, David knew the significance of leaving behind his earthly stature. He easily transitioned from his kingly profile to one of an innocent, playful boy.

### Scripture supports Scripture

- The oldest Biblical scripture that contains the word *anag* is in Job.
- **Job 22: 23-28 – (v 23) If you return to the Almighty, you will be built up; you will remove iniquity far from your tents. (v. 24) Then you will lay your gold in the dust, and the gold of Ophir among the stones of the brooks. (v.25) Yes, the Almighty will be your gold and your precious silver; (v.26) for then you will have your *delight* in the Almighty, and lift up your face to God. (v.27) You will make your prayer to Him, He will hear you, and you will pay your vows. (v.28) You will also declare a thing, and it will be established**

**for you; so light will shine on your ways.**

- Because those verses were originally written hundreds of years before David, it is likely he well knew the passage and was influenced by it in his own thinking. The similarities between it and Psalm 37:4 are striking.

### **The four effects of delighting in the Lord, according to Job**

1. You will be built up (v. 23).
  2. You will remove iniquity from your life (v. 23).
  3. God will become your most valued inheritance, or asset (v. 25-26).
  4. God will hear what you declare, and it will be established (v. 28).
- When you delight in the Lord, and soften yourself in vulnerability before Him, your desires will become what He desires. His desires will automatically be what you want.
  - Therefore, your spoken desires will declare what God has also desired.
  - Obviously, He will then establish those things you are speaking.

### **The New Testament supports the Old Testament**

- The Apostle Paul wrote a similar truth.
- When you submit yourself to God's will, His grace will enable your weaknesses to become strengths.
- **2 Corinthians 12: 9-10 – And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.**
- When you acknowledge your vulnerabilities and weaknesses before God, you will become strong.
- Your battles will be won if you soften yourself before Him.

### **Reflective Questions for Lost in Translation – Part 1**

1. Which of the examples of Biblical misquotes presented by Pastor Stephen was most interesting, or amusing, to you? Why?
2. Psalm 37:4 is sometimes misquoted because only the second clause is cited. Upon reflection, why is it obvious - and a good thing - that God will not automatically give any of us the desires of our hearts?

3. Using the definition of *anag*, explain how the process of weakening yourself before God will enable you to adopt God's desires in place of your own.
4. Does it make sense to you that if you are properly stating God's desire, that it will be established?
5. What things might one first need to do in order to be able to approach God with the attributes represented by the Hebrew word *anag*?