

Why Should I Use the EHV? (The Evangelical Heritage Version)

The print edition of the basic EHV Bible and a print edition of the EHV Study Bible are available from Northwestern Publishing House. Two electronic versions of the EHV Study Bible (one with American measurements and the other with metric measurements) are available from the Microsoft Store. An electronic version of the EHV Study Bible Notes for use with Microsoft and Apple computers, iPhones, and Android phones is available from Faith Life (Logos).

The EHV is becoming available in more catechisms, commentaries, and other works. EHV lectionaries are being used in many congregations. Free licensing is available for other lectionaries. *The Story of God's Love*, a condensed edition of the EHV for use as a textbook and for institutional ministries, is available from NPH. *The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ, A Harmony of the Four Gospels*, is available from NPH.

An obvious question then is, “Why should I try the EHV?”

The simplest and most important answer to that question is that every faithful translation of the Bible delivers the Word of God to its readers. Even if you already have a translation you really like, reading another translation will give you fresh insight into some Bible passages and motivate you to study those verses more carefully.

An additional reason to try a brand-new translation like the EHV is that for dedicated readers of the Bible, the opportunity to participate in the evaluation and improvement of a new Bible translation is likely to be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Regardless of what you decide about a specific translation like the EHV, the opportunity to take a closer look at the process of Bible translation and to participate in evaluating some of the complex decisions that are involved in Bible translation will be its own reward.

As far as the EHV translation specifically, here are a few reasons to give the EHV a look.

A key word for the EHV in defining our goals is *balance*. The goal of our project is to produce a *balanced* translation, suitable for all-purpose use in the church.

We seek a balance between *the old* and *the new*. We respect and try to preserve traditional terms that are well established in the doctrinal statements and the worship life of the church, but the EHV does nevertheless introduce some new terms in those places where the traditional translation no longer communicates clearly. The reason for such new terminology will be explained in the footnotes to the translation, which will also include a reference to the traditional term.

We seek a balance between the poles of so-called *literal* and *dynamic equivalent* theories of translation. A translator should not adhere too closely to any one theory of translation because literalistic, word-for-word translations sometimes convey the wrong meaning, or they do not communicate clearly in the receiving language. Overly free translations deprive the reader of some of the key expressions, imagery, and style of the original biblical texts. So if you like a more literal translation like the NASB, the EHV will provide you with more idiomatic, easy-to-read renderings of many passages, which you can compare with the more literal translations. If you like one of the freer translations, the EHV will provide you with renderings that stick closer

to the Hebrew and Greek texts. Such readings will be presented in the translation itself, with additional options recorded in the footnotes.

Translators should strive for a balance between preserving the *original meaning* of the text and producing *English which sounds natural*, but the preservation of meaning takes priority.

We seek a balance between *formality* and *informality*. The Bible contains many types of literature and different levels of language, from the very simple to the very difficult. For this reason, the translator should not be too committed to producing one level of English but should try to reproduce the tone or “flavor” of the original. Informal conversation should follow a more informal style than a royal proclamation or a divine decree.

The EHV strives to preserve not only the meaning but also the emotional impact of the original. Gentle passages should be gentle. Harsh passages should be harsh. Strong language should not be watered down. Emotional outbursts should be preserved in the translation.

The EHV places a priority on producing a *fuller representation of the Hebrew and Greek biblical texts* than many recent translations do. The EHV includes readings which are well supported by ancient manuscript evidence, but which have been omitted from many other recent translations, because those translations tend to focus on certain limited portions of the manuscript evidence rather than the whole range of evidence which is weighed by the EHV.

We place a *priority on prophecy*, so our translation and notes strive to give clear indications of Messianic prophecy.

The EHV is committed to using *archaeology, geography, and history* to provide a clearer understanding of the original setting of the biblical text, and this will be reflected both in the translation and in the footnotes. Many instances of this are explained in the FAQs on the Wartburg Project website.

We hope that the Evangelical Heritage Version will prove to be very readable to a wide range of users, but the EHV is designed with *learning and teaching* in mind. It is designed to assist careful, in-depth Bible study in the church. We assume that our readers have the ability and the desire to learn new biblical words and to deepen their understanding of important biblical terms and concepts. Translators should not be condescending or patronizing toward their readers but should be dedicated to helping them grow. The Bible was written for ordinary people, but it is a literary work that includes many figures of speech and many rare words. The Bible is a book to be read, but it is also a book to be studied. Our footnotes are designed to assist in the process of learning and teaching. Our translation is in that sense a textbook. This concept is carried out in much depth in our study Bible, which is available in electronic editions and print.

The EHV is a *grass-roots translation*. It makes extensive use of parish pastors and lay people in the editing and evaluation of the translation. This makes the EHV more user-friendly.

The EHV is a *gift to the church*. It was produced at very low cost because of the abundance of volunteer labor. The EHV has also given a written promise that we will not deny individuals or churches, who have obtained rights to use the EHV in derivative works like commentaries or study Bibles, the right to continue to use the version of the EHV which they have adopted, even if new versions of the EHV appear someday.

The FAQs, our rubrics, and the articles available in the library section of our website provide many examples of these principles in practice.

The EHV is available for use in church bulletins and other resources. Several lectionaries can be downloaded from the Wartburg Project website for free congregational use. Authors and composers can obtain permission to use the EHV in works such as commentaries, Bible history books, catechisms, memory passage lists, Bible classes, and study Bibles.