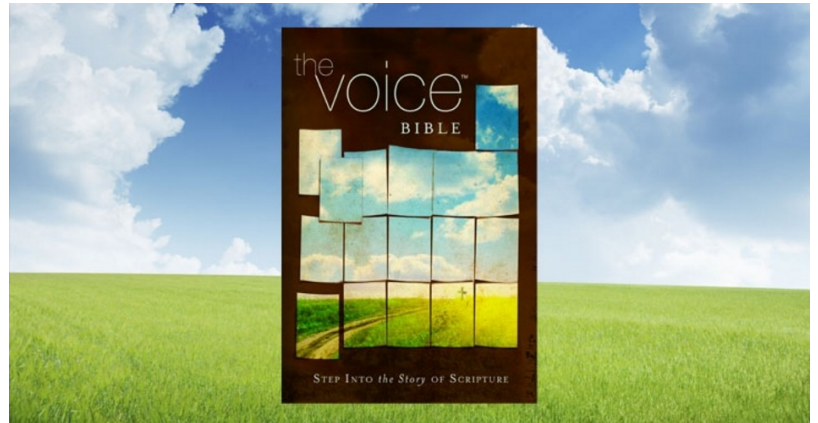




Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on April 24, 2012

New Modern Translation Bible Omits the Term “Christ”

For example, the name “Jesus Christ” has been replaced with “Jesus the Anointed One or the liberating king,” reported [USA Today](#). “That’s a more accurate translation for modern American readers, says David Capes, lead scholar for *The Voice*.... Capes says that many people, even those who’ve gone to church for years, don’t realize that the word ‘Christ’ is a title. ‘They think that Jesus is his first name and Christ is his last name,’ says Capes, who teaches the New Testament at Houston Baptist University in Texas.”



Similarly, the term “angel” is rendered “messenger,” and apostle comes out as “emissary,” Capes said that such terms can confuse and distract the modern reader so that the essential message of Scripture is missed. He told [CNN](#) that the target demographic of *The Voice*, an updated rendering of the King James Version of the Bible, is the “own but never read it” crowd, and is focused on providing a translation that emphasizes the meaning behind the words of Scripture.

“We asked, ‘What kind of questions are they coming to the text with,’” Capes explained to CNN of the translation process. “We ... made that strategic decision, not to transliterate, but to translate everything, to give them the meaning of the text, and to give them the sense of where the story... is going.”

As explained on the promotional [website](#) for the new Bible: “*The Voice* considers the narrative links that help us to understand the drama and passion of story that is present in the original languages. The tone of the writing, the format of the page, and the directness of the dialog allows the tradition of passing down the biblical narrative to come through in *The Voice*.”

Unlike some other translations, such as the recently updated [New International Version](#), *The Voice* “is formatted like a screenplay or novel,” explained *USA Today*. “Translators cut out the ‘he said’ and ‘they said’ and focused on dialogue.”

Cape said he hoped readers of the translation would come to see the Bible “not as an ancient text that’s worn out, but as a story that they participate in and find their lives in.”

The inspiration for the title *The Voice* actually comes from a re-rendering of the beginning of John’s Gospel, which reads in the [King James Version](#): “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1). In *The Voice*, however, the beloved passage reads: “Before time itself was measured, the Voice was speaking. The Voice was and is God.”

Frank Couch, the executive editor and publisher of *The Voice*, said that “voice” better captures the meaning of the Greek [logos](#) than does “word,” an argument he makes for the entire translation. “*The Voice* has not claimed to be more accurate than any other translation,” Couch told the [Christian Post](#). “Rather it is more easily understood than any other translation. When translators are limiting themselves to conveying the complete essence of a word from the Hebrew or the Greek with one



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English word, they have difficulty bringing in the nuances held in the original language.”

Couch told *Christian Post* that the literal renderings of the bulk of Bible translations has made it necessary “for commentators and preachers to spend so much time explaining what the words in the original language mean before the lay reader can understand fully a text of Scripture. Because we have a more expansive translating technique we can more fully develop the English translation and thus bring out the more difficult nuances found in the original language.”

Explained *The Voice's* promotional website: “One of the byproducts of the information age in the church has been its focus on biblical knowledge. Many Bibles reflect this, packed with informative notes, charts, and graphs. While there’s nothing wrong with having a deep knowledge, a personal connection and deep relationship are far better. *The Voice* is focused on helping readers find (or rediscover) this connection with Him. Scripture is presented not as an academic document, but as an engaging story.”

While there has been little official backlash as yet from Bible scholars, expect the new translation to receive its share criticism from those pastors and church leaders who have grown wary of the plethora of Bible versions that have flooded the Christian market over the past decade or so. A foretaste of that feedback can be seen on various Christian blogs and forums, noted the *Christian Post*.

For example, noted the *Post*, the “blog ‘[Extreme Theology](#),’ an apologetics website, declared that *The Voice* was a ‘distorted version of the Bible.’” Wrote the anonymous Orthodox evangelical blogger: “Unfortunately, not since the release of the Jehovah’s Witnesses’ New World Translation of the Greek Scriptures in 1950 has there been a bible published that so blatantly mangles and distorts God’s Word in order to support a peculiar and aberrant theological agenda.”

One may reasonably expect more condemnation of the new translation from conservative evangelicals in the coming months. (The Voice publisher [offers a comparison of its new version to nine other popular Bible translations](#).)



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