

# COLORADO SPRINGS GUIDELINES FOR TRANSLATION OF GENDER-RELATED LANGUAGE IN SCRIPTURE

## A. Gender-related renderings of Biblical language which we affirm:

1. The generic use of “he, him, his, himself” should be employed to translate generic 3rd person masculine singular pronouns in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. However, substantival participles such as *ho pisteuon* can often be rendered in inclusive ways, such as “the one who believes” rather than “he who believes.”
2. Person and number should be retained in translation so that singulars are not changed to plurals and third person statements are not changed to second or first person statements, with only rare exceptions required in unusual cases.
3. “Man” should ordinarily be used to designate the human race, for example in Genesis 1:26-27; 5:2; Ezekiel 29:11; and John 2:25.
4. Hebrew *ish* should ordinarily be translated “man” and “men,” and Greek *aner* should almost always be so translated.
5. In many cases, *anthropoi* refers to people in general, and can be translated “people” rather than “men.” The singular *anthropos* should ordinarily be translated “man” when it refers to a male human being.
6. Indefinite pronouns such as *tis* can be translated “anyone” rather than “any man.”
7. In many cases, pronouns such as *oudeis* can be translated “no one” rather than “no man.”
8. When *pas* is used as a substantive it can be translated with terms such as “all people” or “everyone.”
9. The phrase “son of man” should ordinarily be preserved to retain intracanonical connections.
10. Masculine references to God should be retained.

## B. Gender-related renderings which we will generally avoid, though there may be unusual exceptions in certain contexts:

1. “Brother” (*adelphos*) should not be changed to “brother or sister”; however, the plural *adelphoi* can be translated “brothers and sisters” where the context makes clear that the author is referring to both men and women.
2. “Son” (*huios, ben*) should not be changed to “child,” or “sons” (*huioi*) to “children” or “sons and daughters.” (However, Hebrew *banim* often means “children.”)
3. “Father” (*pater, ab*) should not be changed to “parent,” or “fathers” to “parents” or “ancestors.”

## C. We understand these guidelines to be representative and not exhaustive, and that some details may need further refinement.

Some examples you can check for yourself:

The following verses illustrate the guidelines for translation of gender-related language in Scripture. For Guideline A1 (first sentence): John 14:23; Rev. 3:20; (second sentence): John 3:18. A2: Psalm 1:2; 34:20; Gal. 6:7; James 5:14-15. A3: See guidelines for examples; also Psalm 90:3. A4: Hebrew: Psalm 1:1; Greek: Acts 20:30; 1 Cor. 13:11. A5 (first sentence): Matt. 12:36; (second sentence): 1 Cor. 15:21; 1 Tim. 2:5. A6: Matt. 16:24. A7: Gal. 3:11. A8: John 12:32. A9: Psalm 8:4; Dan. 7:13. A10: Matt. 6:9; John 3:16. B1: Matt. 18:15. B2 (first sentence): Gal. 4:7; (second sentence): Exod. 19:6. B3: Gen. 48:21. (This list of verses was not part of the original signed statement.)

*Affirmed at a meeting at Focus on the Family Headquarters, May 27, 1997 (and revised Sept. 9, 1997), by:*

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*Resolutions opposing "gender-inclusive" Bible translations were also passed in the summer of 1997 by the Southern Baptist Convention, the Presbyterian Church in America, and the Conservative Congregational Christian Churches.*