

5 Charity

& Love in the KJB

Background:

- The Bishops' Bible the Translators used was the 1602 Edition
- Lawrence Giles, Doctor of Greek at Oxford, was responsible for the revision of the New Testament in the 1602 Edition
- In this revision, love was deliberately changed to charity in Certain passages. We will examine these in Table A.
- The KJB translators also made changes that we will consider in this study

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Historically speaking:

- Wycliffe (Translating from the Latin Vulgate, 1388) provided charity for *agape* in 1 Corinthians 13.
- Tyndale provided love (Translating directly from Greek, 1526), as did Coverdale (1535), Matthews (1537), The Great Bible (1539-41), and Geneva (1561).
- Erasmus, in his Paraphrase of the New Testament (1549 edition) provides love in the quoted text and in his exposition/paraphrase below the text, uses charity throughout.

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By the Numbers:

- Charity is used twenty-nine times in twenty-six verses of the New Testament.
- The first instance is 1 Corinthians 8:1. *Agape* is found in verse 1 and in verse 3 of chapter 8.

Differences:

- The KJB translates *agape* as charity in verse 1 and love in verse 3.
- Why? The KJB translators had both words at their disposal. The reasons for the KJB selections are that:
 - (1) Man's love to God is not the same as man's love toward man.
 - (2) A believer's love toward mankind in general is not the same as his love toward other believers.
 - (3) God's love directed to a lost world is different from His love toward believers.
 - (4) A man's love toward God is proven by outward deeds.

1 Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. 2 And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. 3 But if any man love God, the same is known of him. (1 Corinthians 8:1-3)

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What the KJB translators said about Uniformity of Translation:

Another thing we think good to admonish thee of (gentle Reader) that we have not tied ourselves to an uniformity of phrasing, or to an identity of words, as some peradventure would wish that we had done, because they observe, that some learned men somewhere, have been as exact as they could that way. Truly, that we might not vary from the sense of that which we had translated before, if the word signified that same in both places (for there be some words that be not the same sense everywhere) we were especially careful, and made a conscience, according to our duty. But, that we should express the same notion in the same particular word; as for example, if we translate the

Hebrew or Greek word once by PURPOSE, never to call it INTENT; if one where JOURNEYING, never TRAVELING; if one where THINK, never SUPPOSE; if one where PAIN, never ACHE; if one where JOY, never GLADNESS, etc. Thus to mince the matter, we thought to savour more of curiosity than wisdom, and that rather it would breed scorn in the Atheist, than bring profit to the godly Reader. For is the kingdom of God to become words or syllables? why should we be in bondage to them if we may be free, use one precisely when we may use another no less fit, as commodiously?

11 **Charity & Love in the KJB-Charitably**

- A closer look at the adverb, Charitably, which appears once in the KJB at Romans 14:15, will go a long way in understanding why the KJB translators used charity over love where the context is love between Christian brethren.

But if thy brother be grieved with *thy* meat, now walkest thou not

charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

- To walk charitably is to put a Christian brother above oneself. This is clear in the context of the verse itself, and in entirety of Romans chapter fourteen.

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Charitably is further defined in Gal. 5:13:

For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only *use* not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

Challenge for the believer:

But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:

2 That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith,
in charity, in patience. Titus 2:1-2

- To be sound in charity is to put other believers first
- Charity seeks a vital and essential spiritual relationship between believers
- The attributes of charity are clearly laid out in 1 Corinthians 13. 1-13