

New International Version (2011)

A thorough revision of the 1984 NIV was completed in 2005. This was called Today's New International Version (TNIV).

Another updated NIV was published in 2011. Since the 2011 edition was published, the publisher, Zondervan, no longer publishes any previous editions of the NIV, nor does Zondervan grant any permissions to quote earlier editions in Bible quotations.

One of the major changes in the 2005 and 2011 translations was a shift in the way gender was presented. Let's look at some examples of this, comparing NIV 84 with NIV 11.

◆ 1 Timothy 2:3,4

1984: *This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ, Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men...*

2011: *This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people.*

What comments do you have after you compare those sections?

◆ 1 Corinthians 15:1,2

1984: *Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you.*

2011: *Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you [and the rest is identical to 1984].*

What do you think of the change?

◆ Matthew 16:24

1984: *"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it."*

2011: *"Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it."*

What do you think of the change?

Some of the gender-neutral changes seem to help a reader to understand the text better. Some of the gender-neutral changes seem forced and may even muddy a reader's understanding. Let's look at possible examples of this.

The Greek word *adelphos* is the word for *brother*. As in some other languages, this word and masculine forms can sometimes be used for both genders when addressing a group. But it is not necessarily always referring to both genders every time it is used to address a group. Context is important in seeking to understand who the speaker is addressing.

There is a specific Greek word for *sister*, and that is *adelphē*. That word is specifically used at times in the New Testament although not in any examples of addressing a person or a group.

◆ 1 Corinthians 14:34,39

1984: *Women should remain silent in the churches...Therefore, [adelphoi] my brothers, be eager to prophesy...*

2011: *Women should remain silent in the churches...Therefore, my brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy...*

After just saying women should remain silent, is Paul now telling them to be eager to prophesy?

◆ Acts 6:1-4

2011: *In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "[Adelphoi] Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom."*

Were women involved in the choosing of these men, or not?

The Greek word *aner* is the word for *a male*. It is opposite to *gune*, which is the word for *a female*. There are times when a speaker addresses a group as *andres adelphoi* [men brothers].

Sometimes NIV 2011 translates *andres adelphoi* as *Brothers* and sometimes as *Fellow Israelites*.

NIV 2011 leaves *andres adelphoi* untranslated in Acts 13:26.

So NIV 2011 handles the expression in different ways. But in Acts 1:15-17 it does this:

- ◆ *In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) and said, "[Andres adelphoi] Brothers and sisters, the Scripture had to be fulfilled in which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through David concerning Judas, who served as a guide for those who arrested Jesus. He was one of our number and shared in our ministry."*

The context continues with praying, casting lots, and choosing the next apostle.

Why ignore the *Andres [Men]* and include sisters? Were the women part of casting lots?

Bible Translations

The Greek word *aner* can also mean *husband*, just like *gune* can mean *wife*. Context will tell.

For example, *aner* is most certainly *husband* in Ephesians 5 and 1 Peter 3.

In 1 Corinthians 11 Paul is talking about the relationship of males and females in worship.

NIV 2011 translates *man* and *woman* throughout the section.

But in a footnote it says of verse 3, "Or [the head] *of the wife is her husband.*" That can be confusing.

The same context says in verse 12: "For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman."

It would make no sense to say: "For as wife came from husband, so also husband is born of wife."

Why suggest that Paul may be speaking about husbands and wives instead of men and women?

Compare the two translations of 1 Timothy 2:11-12.

- ◆ NIV 1984: *A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent.*

NIV 2011: *A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet.*

(NIV 2011 also footnotes: "Or *wife*" and "Or *over her husband.*")

Why the difference between "have authority" (1984) and "assume authority" (2011)?

Agree or disagree? A modern Bible translation should use gender-inclusive language.