Why I read the SLB

I read and quote the SLB (Steadfast Literal Bible), my own translation.

I chose it because it is a word-for-word translation in today's language, built on the ancient Scripture sources: the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.

About the BSB

The BSB (Berean Standard Bible) is a modern translation dedicated to the public domain. Anyone can quote it, print it and share it without asking permission, and it reads more easily than the NASB.

So far only one guide places the BSB (in the balanced band), so treat that spot as tentative. Reading the two side by side is a good way to see how translators make their choices.

Acronym key

AMP Amplified Bible
BSB Berean Standard Bible
CEB Common English Bible
CEV Contemporary English Version
CJB Complete Jewish Bible
CSB Christian Standard Bible
ECPA Evangelical Christian Publishers Association
ERV Easy-to-Read Version
ESV English Standard Version
GNT Good News Translation
ICB International Children's Bible
KJV King James Version
LSB Legacy Standard Bible
MSG The Message
NABRE New American Bible Revised Edition
NASB New American Standard Bible
NIrV New International Reader's Version
NIV New International Version
NJB New Jerusalem Bible
NKJV New King James Version
NLT New Living Translation
NRSV New Revised Standard Version
SLB Steadfast Literal Bible
TLB The Living Bible
TLV Tree of Life Version
TPT The Passion Translation

Sources: bands are the median of published guides (Logos/Faithlife, Christianbook, Bible Gateway, Tyndale, Olive Tree); popularity from the ECPA bestseller list, September 2026.

Full guide: "Bible Translations - Literal to Interpretive Comparison" workbook and the one-page Comparison Brochure, from Andrew Dominguez, Trinfinity Enterprises.

Which Bible Should I Read?

A quick guide to English Bible translations, from word-for-word to paraphrase

Date: 2026-11-04



1 = most literal 5 = paraphrase

Andrew Dominguez, Trinfinity Enterprises

The five bands

*Placements are the median of the guides. * = ECPA top 10 (September 2026).*

1 Interlinear or very literal	*No guide places one here. Interlinears belong here by format.*
2 Formal (word-for-word)	NASB 1995*, NASB 2020*, LSB, ESV*, KJV*, NKJV*, NRSV*, RSV, Douay-Rheims
3 Balanced (mediating)	NIV*, CSB*, NIrV*, BSB, NET, CEB, NABRE, NJB, TLV, ICB, ERV
4 Functional (thought-for-thought)	NLT*, GNT, CEV, CJB
5 Paraphrase	MSG, TLB

Guides split: AMP falls between 2 and 3; TPT between 4 and 5.

Which Bible fits you?

My suggestions, based on each Bible's band and who its publisher wrote it for.

Close study of the original wording

NASB 1995 (band 2), LSB (band 2), ESV (band 2)

Study and everyday reading in one Bible

CSB (band 3), NIV (band 3), BSB (band 3)

Everyday reading

NLT (band 4), NIV (band 3), CSB (band 3)

Reading aloud to children

ICB (band 3), NIrV (band 3)

First-time readers

NLT (band 4), NIrV (band 3), GNT (band 4)

Catholic readers

NABRE (band 3), NJB (band 3), Douay-Rheims (band 2)

Messianic Jewish readers

TLV (band 3), CJB (band 4)

What "literal" means

A literal (formal) translation keeps close to the wording and word order of the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. A thought-for-thought (functional) translation gives the meaning in natural English. More literal does not mean more accurate or more faithful; every translation has to interpret. The two approaches aim at different goals, and using one of each is a good habit.

ECPA top 10

Bible Translations Bestsellers, September 2026

1. NIV
2. ESV
3. KJV
4. NLT
5. NKJV
6. Reina Valera (Spanish)
7. CSB
8. NIrV
9. NASB
10. NRSV