

First and Center
Pastor's Blog
November 20, 2019

It is always good to read more than one translation of the Bible because translation is a tricky thing. Every translator or team of translators brings their own bias to the translation, even if they are unaware of that. One example is that in the King James Translation and others before it (after the 12th century), a name is changed from female to male in the book of Romans! Paul speaks of a “Junia” who was in prison with him, and sometime after the 11th century, translators were certain he could not have meant a woman leader who was imprisoned with him (though the verses before this in chapter 16 refer to several woman leaders), so they changed the name to the male form. A small thing, perhaps, but illustrative of the point.



It's also helpful because sometimes a Hebrew or Greek word might be translated into several different English words, and the choice of word changes things slightly, or significantly. Often, I simply find that reading a different version than my usual go-to (the NRSV) engages my imagination or thinking in new ways.

Such was the case when I was reading through a new translation of the Bible by David Bentley Hart. Several verses stood out to me in new ways, for which I was grateful. One was Romans 8:24-25, "*For in hope we have been saved, but a hope seen is not hope; for why hope for what one sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we anticipate by perseverance.*"

What caught me was "*we anticipate by perseverance.*" To persevere in anticipation is a wonderful way of thinking about whatever it is we hope for by the grace of God. It's not perseverance in **doing** anything. It is the spiritual perseverance of hope that God is still at work in the world and that we can be sure God is still working with us.

Persevere in anticipation, everyone. Don't give in to thinking that whatever seems hopeless is the last word. Persevere.

~ Rev. Shelly Stackhouse,
Transitional Minister