



The New Testament

Richmond Lattimore (Translator)

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Richmond Lattimore, among the most distinguished translators of the Greek classics, concluded late in his life one of his most ambitious projects — a complete translation of the New Testament. Published in its entirety for the first time in 1996, this New Testament is itself a classic of another kind — the words of the Gospel and the apostles presented for the modern reader in fresh English by a writer without pretensions as a biblical scholar, who was an authority on the Greek language in which these texts have come down to us. *The New York Times* hailed the first volume as "an achievement that places us more deeply in Lattimore's debt than any other in a long and diligent career."

Lattimore's aim was to provide a simple, literal rendering in which the syntax and order of the Greek dictate the character of the English style. He lets the words of the apostles and early disciples speak for themselves with an accuracy and fidelity to the original language that is a gift to today's reader.

The New Testament Details

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From Reader Review The New Testament for online ebook

Jodi McMaster says

Lattimore's translation of the New Testament is refreshingly free of an agenda; his goal was to give a coherent, faithful translation of the Greek. As a result, he has created some interesting issues for those whose theology relies on literalism; most will probably go back to those translations made by religious publishers. Intellectual honesty, though, should compel those who struggle with their Christian orientation to read this translation. I found it actually clarified some issues for me.

People say my name should be Jeff says

I'm reading the KJV, the 1611 KJV, the Tyndale, and the NIV. This is BY FAR the best translation. I love that he doesn't have the pretension of being a biblical scholar. He's just a classicist who wanted to use his knowledge of Greek to do a translation true to the greek. I think that he succeeded marvelously.

Suzanne says

People get nervous when they found out that an atheist is reading the New Testament. The (admittedly safe) assumption is that the atheist is engaging in the sport of hunting down textual inconsistencies to use as cannon fodder for future debates with Christians.

If you're an atheist looking to do this, let me gently steer you away from this course. Here's why: Christians already know. They are aware that there are significant and often troubling inconsistencies. I assure you that they have people working on this around the clock. Some have reached conclusions that settle the discrepancies to their satisfaction. Some continue to search for explanations. What's important here is that when you smirkingly present your findings to them they will roll their eyes and sigh with a resigned exasperation because, they know. But thanks.

Let me now speak to the few areas on which I can provided any further elucidation about this text. First, I loved this translation. The King James version might be quite lovely and sonorous and thrilling. But it might also be quite syntactically tedious, ponderous and coma-inducing. I hate it. It has turned me off of the idea of reading the New Testament so many times that Satan is getting jealous about it.

However, the more pop-modern translations that put the NT into a hip-tastic vernacular (And then Pontius Pilate was all, "You want I should off this guy, Boss?") make me want to turn over a few tables myself.

Lattimore strikes just the right note with this mesmerizingly stark and beautiful translation that I could. not. put. down. I only meant to read the Gospels but I had to keep reading.

Least favorite part: It's a tie between Revelations (though I'm completely ecstatic to finally know what people are talking about when they talk about the Whore of Babylon) and the Parables. No. It's the Parables.

My favorite part and the part I will take away from this reading is what drew me to reading my Children's

Bible over and over as a child: the message of kindness and love and forgiveness and humility. That will surprise people who know me because in my life my default reaction to all negativity is (talking about) swift and blinding violence. I'm multifaceted like that. I felt most in touch with this message while reading the Pauline Epistles.

Whether the Bible is true or not was not relevant to my reading of it. I was not interested in debating any theology. I was just interested in studying it as a historical document set in its historical context. You read it for your own reasons. A really good reason would be that a lot of you (where "you" means people arguing from either end of the spectrum of belief) are getting it wrong and that means you've been arguing for nothing. I think if you read it, you'll be less inclined to argue, for any number of reasons.

T Hamboyan Harrison says

This is my favorite translation of the New Testament. Lattimore accomplishes what all good translators attempt but few truly accomplish: to create a translation that is faithful to the original while transferring the power and intensity into the new language.

In this translation, narratives read like narratives. Letters read like letters. This translation is powerful and accessible.

Douglas Wilson says

Scripture. Finished reading the second time in October 2012.

Doug May says

I had the distinct blessing to be handed one of these by a Billy Graham worker while I attended the Pan Am Games in Indianapolis Indiana. The Living translation incorporated testimonies of athletes including distance runner Frank Shorter that influenced me. It was my first encounter of a translation in a language I could easily grasp. Over a period of months the book transformed my life until finally I was baptized and professed Jesus Christ as my savior. The rest is history to the present when I serve as an elder at a congregation.

Johnny says

This is my favorite translation (Richard Lattimore) of the new testament. The author translates from the original Greek text, with the intentions of being true to the original text, and readable to modern readers. Most new testaments are translations of translations, with every translator inserting and insinuating his or her own biases. If what you are after is what the texts originally said, I think this is your best bet.

Of the Lattimore I have read the Gospels, the Acts, and the Revelation. I'll get to the letters some time soon.

I'm a bit embarrassed about having rated this book before I've finished it. Consider the 5-star rating as applying to the Gospels and the Revelation, (these 5 books can be purchased under separate cover), and the Acts.

Manny says

A wonderfully ambitious science fiction novel; the author boldly attempts to imagine what it would be like to meet an emissary from an alien culture that was both technologically, and, more interestingly, *morally*, far superior to our own. The first problem to tackle when structuring the narrative is, of course, that such a person would be beyond our comprehension. I approved of the solution chosen: the novel is recounted by multiple narrators, whose conflicting testimonies show that all of them are more or less unreliable. We thus have no more than confused echoes of the story. This is, paradoxically, more convincing than a direct telling, which could only have been disappointing.

The rest of this review is available elsewhere (the location cannot be given for Goodreads policy reasons)

Rick Davis says

This was a fantastic translation of the New Testament. I was both excited and a bit doubtful when I began reading it. Lattimore was a master of Classical Greek and produced definitive translations of both the Iliad and the Odyssey; however, he was not known as a scholar of Koine Greek, the Greek in which the New Testament was written. Overall, I think this actually works in his favor to an extent. The fact that certain phrases which readers of the New Testament take for granted are given a slightly different shade of meaning (for example, Lattimore always translated "summoned" where most translations would have "called") causes the reader of the text to take notice of the context in a fresh way. There are also a couple of ways in which Lattimore's strict desire to translate the text without unduly altering the Greek syntax is wonderful. ? *Χριστός*, for example, is always translated "the Christ" instead of simply "Christ," paying special attention to the definite article. Also *δούλος* is invariably, and correctly, translated "slave" rather than "servant" as is seen in most modern translations. Other than these idiosyncrasies, the translation stands mostly in line with modern literal translations such as the ESV, NASB or RSV.

Laura Lee says

Not a breeze through it kind of book. It's on my shelf to refer to.

Matt Fox says

Because of my short classics background, I trust Lattimore's translation of texts in ancient Greek more than any other translator, since his are the most accurate. The result shows the beauty of the New Testament unfettered by flowerly phrasings and pomp that other translations feel the need to use in order to elevate the words (or Word) into pomp. The pure, simple language is still beautiful and makes reading the New Testament a complete joy. I wish Lattimore knew Hebrew--I would love to have seen him tackle the Old Testament.

vittore paleni says

A refreshing translation from a famed and accomplished classicist. Although one would have hoped for more notes in the back explaining his decisions.

Thomas says

About the highest accolade that can be given a translator is that the reader can hear the original in the translation. This is true of Lattimore's translation of the NT. He does not sweeten the text to sound more pleasant to modern ears, and he does not cut sentences with multiple dependent clauses into more easily digestible sentences.

For example, where the Greek says *doulos* he translates "slave," because that is what the Greek word means. (The fact that slavery as an institution had a different context in the first century might be a reason to translate "servant," but that is a liberty Lattimore does not take.)

And where most other translations break up a passage like Colossians 1:3-9 into several sentences, Lattimore gives us one long sentence. That is how it appears in the Greek, and this strange style has given rise to the notion that perhaps Paul was not the author of Colossians, because this is not typical of Paul's style. This kind of detail with respect to the language is not available in other translations.

The main drawback here is that Lattimore's English is rather plain, and by comparison to the KJV, boring in its simple honesty. It is also not a study Bible -- not only are there no footnotes or commentary, the verses aren't even numbered. (There are a few endnotes, mostly on ambiguities in the Greek.)

Lattimore's NT is not a replacement for other standard versions, but I think it deserves a place on the shelf next to those versions as a strictly literal alternative.

Michael says

a brilliant and valuable translation of the New testament. highly recommended

Matthew Hundley says

I came across the Lattimore translation of the New Testament in a Borders in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Presented in standard book form (no chapter and verse references other than the top of the page) and from the vantage point of one translator (not a committee of scholars). Later in seminary while studying Greek I gained a new respect for Lattimore's ability to capture the voices of the authors. A must have for any student of God's word.
