

# L + I + V + I + N + G + L + A + R + G + E

Any Church, Any Sunday . . .

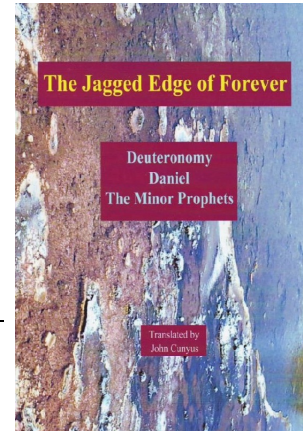
John Cunyus, Minister "at large" - Central Christian Church, Dallas, Texas

[www.JohnCunyus.com](http://www.JohnCunyus.com)   [www.cccd.org](http://www.cccd.org)   [John@JohnCunyus.com](mailto:John@JohnCunyus.com)

214-662-5494

214-526-7291

888-896-6081



"Resources and Encouragement for Adult Christian Education."  
A Ministry of Central Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Dallas, Texas.

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Come Visit the

Westside Café and Worship

(Podcast on the web at [www.cccd.org](http://www.cccd.org))

## August Notes

Did anybody else see the freight train that was August go blasting by? It's hard to believe



First Christian Church  
Rockdale, Texas

September is already on us, isn't it? But August was a good month. I started it off preaching at my home church, Central Christian in Dallas, while **Pastor Norm Stolpe** was away at the Disciples General Assembly.

The following week I reunited with an old friend and colleague, **Rev. Earl Presley**, to teach Sunday School and preach at First Christian Church in Rockdale, Texas.

Mid-month I went to Central Christian Church in Weatherford, Texas, led by **Rev. Danny Couch**. I taught Sunday School and listening in worship to an inspiring

presentation about Central's mission work in Ecuador.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup>, I ventured beyond familiar Disciples of Christ walls into First United Methodist Church of Dallas, where the Crossroads class gave me a warm welcome.

Finally, I wrapped up the month with the incomparable **Dr. Chris Pulliam** at First Christian Church of Tyler.

## Travelogue

### August 2009

2<sup>nd</sup> – Central Christian, Dallas.

9<sup>th</sup> – First Christian, Rockdale, Texas.

16<sup>th</sup> – Central Christian, Weatherford, Texas.

23<sup>rd</sup> – First United Methodist, Dallas.

30<sup>th</sup> – First Christian, Tyler, Texas.

### September 2009

6<sup>th</sup> – Central Christian, Pilot Point, Texas.

13<sup>th</sup> – Evening: University Christian, Fort Worth.

20<sup>th</sup> – Morning: First United Methodist, Dallas, Koinonia Class.

Evening: UCC, Fort Worth.

27<sup>th</sup> – Morning: First United Methodist, Dallas, Koinonia Class.

Evening: UCC, Fort Worth.

## Reviewers' Comments

"I want to express my gratitude for this translation. My wife Alicia brought it home in October, but we were in the midst of moving to the Metroplex. As 'fate' would have it, my daily Bible reading took me into Proverbs this January. Reading it in English had been difficult for me, because my mind seemed to wander. But when I picked up this interlinear translation, it was breathtaking!

"My Latin is not very good, but somehow reading a familiar text in an unfamiliar tongue uses a part of my mind that wasn't engaged previously. Particularly since some of the Latin words are such close cognates to English---yet just different enough that I have to think about what the Latin is really communicating.

"It sounds odd, but this book is helping me engage scripture because it takes what was once familiar and turns it into something strange---yet comprehensible. And I am grateful."

– **Rev. Joseph Harker**  
Senior Minister  
United Disciples Christian Church  
Richardson, Texas

## Current Needs

This ministry is sponsored by Central Christian Church of Dallas. My mission is to go to "Any Church, Any Sunday," regardless of the congregation's size or ability to pay.

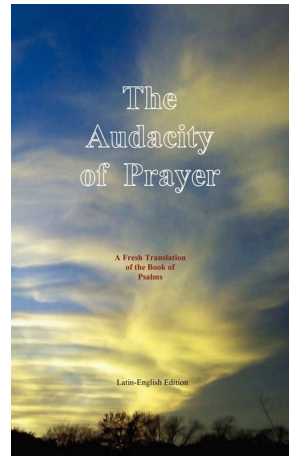
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## So Far, from Searchlight Press

[The Way of Wisdom: Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon.](#) English and Latin-English Editions. Published Fall 2008.



[The Audacity of Prayer: A Fresh Translation of the Book of Psalms](#)

[The Audacity of Prayer: A Fresh Translation of the Book of Psalms.](#)

English and Latin-English Editions.  
Published Spring 2009.

[The Jagged Edge of Forever: Deuteronomy, Daniel, and the Minor Prophets.](#) English only Edition. Scheduled for publication, Fall of 2009.

[Beginnings: A Fresh Translation of Genesis,](#) Latin-English Edition. Scheduled for Advent 2009.

**Currently Translating**  
Leviticus

## Scheduling!

Praise God from whom all blessings flow! The calendar is full between now and the end of the year, except for Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, December 27<sup>th</sup>! If you'd like to get on the list for those dates, please get in touch soon!

## Contact Information

John Cunyus  
214-662-5494  
[www.JohnCunyus.com](http://www.JohnCunyus.com)  
[John@JohnCunyus.com](mailto:John@JohnCunyus.com)

### Notes on Translation

Mark me down as one of those who believes in the inspired, inerrant Word of God. That said, we need to remember what exactly that inspired, inerrant Word actually is. In what Christians call the Old Testament, the original documents were all written in Hebrew. That text itself is the one many consider to be without error in its original manuscripts.

Of course, we don't have those original manuscripts anymore. They must be reconstructed from the texts we do have. From the various manuscript families that have come down to us, though, we can establish with a high degree of probability what those original letters were. In the course of reconstructing them, we find out some extraordinary facts about them. These Hebrew texts were, as it were, bare bones, almost elemental in their form.

The original Hebrew texts had no punctuation and no capitalization. The scribes left no space between words either. Before this inspired, inerrant text could be interpreted or even read, someone had to decide where to put in things like periods and commas. An interpreter also had to decide which letters went with which words. Needless to say, such issues have a considerable influence on how the text is understood.

Yet the text was even more bare bones than that. The original Hebrew, written from right to left, had no vowels. Imagine a long series of consonants, then, unbroken by punctuation or spacing, with even the vowels lacking. Consider this consonant string as an example of what that might entail:

WTHPPLFTHNTDSTTSNRDRTRFRMMRPRFCTNN

Does it seem puzzling? With punctuation, word spacing, and vowels added, it becomes the more recognizable Preamble to the United States Constitution: *We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union . . .*

Elements like punctuation, spacing, and vowels were added to the text over time, of course, to make the bare bones of the word come alive for hearers and, more specifically, readers. It is important to remember, though, that they weren't there to begin with. So, any text we see that has such elements is already a step away from the inspired, inerrant Word.

This is not to say such elements were added idly or in

error. Yet there is variation between various ancient strands and traditions as to which elements to insert where. The modern-day Hebrew Bible itself, complete with spacing, punctuation, and vowels, follows a system finalized by the Masoretes, a Jewish scholarly tradition, in the 10th Century of the Common Era.

The earliest known translation of the Hebrew text was into Greek, a document that became known as The Septuagint. The Septuagint's translators, though, were rather free in their translating. When St. Jerome turned his attention to translating the Old Testament in 383 of the Common Era, he originally set to work on The Septuagint, that version being the most widely used Bible among Christians of his era. He soon became dissatisfied with it, though, leading him to enroll in the 4th Century equivalent of Hebrew school and master the original language, as taught by the rabbis in Jerusalem at the time. Jerome's rigorous translation stayed much closer to the Hebrew original than The Septuagint translators did before him.

In fact, Jerome's translation is a uniquely powerful witness to the underlying Word. Jerome himself was regarded as "the most learned of the Latin fathers." He built upon the immense scholarly labors of those who came before him, most notably Origen and his Alexandrian Hexapla. Jerome worked before the serial calamities of Rome's fall, Muslim conquests, the destruction of the library at Alexandria, and the Christian crusades. He present us with a 'best practices' text, inclusive of much that has been lost.

Studying Jerome's translation, we discern the state of the scholarly art at the end of the 4th Century of the Common Era. Comparison of place names between Jerome's text and the later Masoretic text clearly shows that vowel pointings varied during the centuries that passed between them. Taking nothing away from the Hebrew text that has been passed on to us, we can affirm the value of Jerome's explicitly Christian example.

The differences, while at times striking, amount more to a matter of accent than essence. Jerome's accent is clearly Christian and Latin. The Masoretic accent, of course, is Jewish and Hebrew. What remains, though, is the underlying text that inspired them both. The inspired, inerrant Word, in the hands of faithful translators, continues to transform lives, in whatever language we find it.

**Psalm 23** *psalmus David Dominus reget me et nihil mihi deerit*

A psalm of David.

The Lord will guide me.

Nothing will be lacking to me.

**23:2** *in loco pascuae ibi me conlocavit super aquam refectionis educavit me*

In a place of pasture –  
there He established me.

He taught me  
over refreshing waters.

**23:3** *animam meam convertit deduxit me super semitas iustitiae propter nomen suum*

He converted my soul.

He led me over fair paths,  
for His name's sake.

**23:4** *nam et si ambulavero in medio umbrae mortis non timebo mala quoniam tu mecum es virga tua et baculus tuus ipsa me consolata sunt*

Even if I walk in the midst  
of death's shadow,  
I will not fear harm

because You are with me.  
Your rod and Your staff –  
these consoled me.

**23:5** *parasti in conspectu meo mensam adversus eos qui tribulant me inpinguasti in oleo caput meum et calix meus inebrians quam praeclarus est*

You prepared a table  
in my sight,  
against those who afflict me.

You anointed my head  
with oil.

My cup, inebriating,  
how clear it is!

**23:6** *et misericordia tua subsequitur me omnibus diebus vitae meae et ut inhabitem in domo Domini in longitudinem dierum*

Your mercy will follow me  
all my life's days,  
so that I will live  
in the Lord's house  
through length of days.

(From The Audacity of Prayer:

A Fresh Translation of the Book of Psalms)

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