

STRONG'S NUMBERING SYSTEM - WHY?

From time to time, when reading articles about passages in the Bible, references are made to a number referring to a system known as Strong's Numbering System; a system that puts a number on every translated word of the Bible. The exceptions are a few words that have been added by the translators which they felt were necessary to make the English more readable. These words are normally italicized.

A simple explanation is that every word in both the Old and New Testaments has been assigned a number. There is one set of numbers for the Hebrew and Aramaic word of the Old Testament and another for the Greek of the New Testament. This system allows one to look up the meaning of these words in reference books written by those knowledgeable in the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek languages.

Why would anyone want to look up the meaning of words from the Bible when The Bible translators have already done this? Are the translations correct? The English Bible tries to be a word for word translation, turning words and phrases into something hard to understand.

An example is the English word "judgment" in the New Testament. What kind of judgment is meant by this Greek word? In John 5:22-27 the Greek words translated judgment have one of two meanings. One is a judgment of guilt or innocence, and the other is a judgment of punishment. Once understood, a determination of which judgment is meant will add to the clarity of understanding the scripture. Reference the article JOHN 5:22 found at www.biblicalcalendarproof.com

The word "love" in the New Testament presents a greater problem. The Greek does not have a single word describing love as the English language has. The Greek has eight different words for love that have a different shade of meaning, and range from Godly love and outgoing concern for another, to a brotherly love as David and Johnathan had. Also, it can be directed to the love within the family, or to the love of self, making it obvious that to correctly understand a Bible passage where the English word love is used, the Strong's number must be found, which will direct the reader to the right type of love that is meant in the original Greek.

A second type of problem faced in all Bible translations is one of changing the meaning, or shading the meaning of a word to fit the ideology of the translators. This is done to support their power and authority. A passage like this is seen in Matt. 24:45 where it reads "*Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household to give them food in due season.*" This is done to support power and authority of the one who wants to rule, or to promote a belief of a particular religious denomination.

The word "ruler" here is Strong's number 2525, meaning one set in place. It correctly means one set in place to serve, not to rule. This meaning is confirmed by Christ in a direct statement in Matt. 20:25-28. "*But Jesus called them to Himself and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not*

be so among you, but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave - Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

By understanding the correct meaning when the word rule is changed to one set in place it is easy to see it means one set to serve, and they will be feeding God’s people the true words of Christ.

The same type of problem is seen in Heb. 13 verses 7, 17, and 24. Verse 7, *“Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.”* Here the Strong’s number for rule over is 2233, with the meaning one leading the way by example, and is made clear that to follow the example of the rulers by considering the end result of the way they live their lives.

This is a far cry from obediently following orders without question, and also implies that a determination must be made by each individual to measure the conduct of those leading the way.

Verse 17, *“Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.”* The first word used is obey, and is Strong’s number 3982, with the meaning of being persuaded by the conduct of those leading the way by example. Here we can see the corruption of the two words, “obey” and “rule over you.” The meaning should be that one is persuaded by the actions of those leading the way. Once this is determined God’s people are to be submissive, for the rulers watch for your eternal life.

Then in verse 24 we find, *“Greet all those who rule over you, and all the saints. Those from Italy greet you.”* Again it is seen the same word for rule, number 2233, which is the same word used in verse 7. It should be translated “those leading the way.”

An obvious question would be: Why would the translators be using the wrong definitions for the two words ruler and obey? It is understood that King James had total authority over which words the translators used, as he was the sole leader of the Church of England at that time. These words were mistranslated deliberately to cement his authority and power over the church and its people.

There is no incentive for the present day churches to relinquish their authority over the people in their care. Some translations may have softened the word rule. However, the idea for rule and obey has never been changed; it is still one of claiming authority.

By the few examples given, it should be clear that Christ gave His people a great tool with the Strong’s Numbering System used to convey the truth of His inspired word.

Don Roth
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