

# KIDMUNITY | God's Word, My Life

## Lesson 04: Why So Many Bibles?

### Large Group Script

#### Bottom Line:

*God's Word in every language.*

#### Memory Verse:

*Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. Matthew 24:35*

#### Supplies Needed

- Large Bible (to hold up)
- Two or three different Bible translations (NIV, ESV, NLT, etc.)
- Phone or tablet with Google Translate app
- **Slide of John 3:16 in multiple translations**
- **Slide of the translation spectrum (word-for-word → thought-for-thought)**

### Welcome & Hook: So Many Bibles?

[Hold up two or three different Bibles.]

“Wait a second... why are there so many different Bibles? Which one is the right one? Are some of them fake?”

Kids might shout answers. Nod.

“Great questions! When you walk into a bookstore or search online, you’ll find *dozens* of versions of the Bible. That can be confusing. But here’s the good news — all these Bibles are trying to help us do the same thing: **understand God’s Word.**”

### How the Bible Spread

“Let’s back up for a minute. The Bible didn’t always look like the one you’re holding today.

At first, the books of the Bible were written on scrolls and letters. Churches carefully copied these manuscripts and passed them around. Over time, all those manuscripts were collected, and church leaders decided which books belonged in the Bible.

For hundreds of years, you probably wouldn't have had your own Bible at home. Your church might have had one copy, and it was often written in **Latin** — a language that most everyday people couldn't even read. That meant only priests could read it, and regular people just had to listen.

But about 400 years ago, something amazing happened. Followers of Jesus worked hard to translate the Bible into everyday languages — English, German, French, Spanish — so that everyone could read it and understand it.

[Hold up Bible.]

“God’s Word is for everyone — and it’s in your hands.”

## Original Languages

[Show slide: Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek.]

“The Bible wasn’t written in English. The Old Testament was mostly in **Hebrew**, with a little bit in **Aramaic**. The New Testament was written in **Greek**. Those were the everyday languages of the people who first read God’s Word.

But since most of us don’t read Hebrew or Greek, we need translations to understand it today.”

## Translations Help Us Today

[Hold up phone with Google Translate open.]

“Let’s try something. I’m going to say: ‘God loves you.’”

[Speak into the app and show the Spanish translation: “Dios te ama.”]

“See how it changes? Translating from one language to another isn’t always simple. Sometimes there’s not an exact match for a word. Translators have to make careful choices so we understand the meaning.”

### Story Example – Faith in Hammocks:

“In Colombia, South America, there’s a people group called the Motilón Indians. They live in the rainforest and sleep in hammocks tied between trees.

When missionaries were translating the Bible for them, they came to the word *faith*. But faith isn’t something you can see or touch — it’s trust. So how do you explain it?

The Motilón people had a word for tying your hammock tightly to a tree so you could rest peacefully, knowing it would hold.

So when they translated *faith in God*, it became: ‘Tie your hammock strings to God.’ Isn’t that amazing? That’s what faith really is — putting your whole trust in Him.”

## Word-for-Word vs. Thought-for-Thought

[Show translation spectrum slide.]

“Different translations work in different ways.

- **Word-for-Word** (like ESV, NASB, KJV): as close as possible to the original words. Very exact, but sometimes harder to read.
- **Thought-for-Thought** (like NLT, GNT, Message): focused on clear meaning in today’s language. Easier to read, but words can vary.
- **NIV** sits in the middle — balancing accuracy and readability.

That’s why many people use NIV, but really, all these versions help us understand the same truth.”

## Compare a Verse

[Show slide of John 3:16 in ESV, NIV, and NLT. Read each one aloud.]

“Do you notice some small differences in wording? But did the message change? No way! Every version still says the same truth — God loved the world so much that He gave His Son, Jesus.”

## Why It Matters

“God wants every generation, in every nation, to understand His Word. That’s why the Bible has been translated into hundreds of languages.

Even though the words may sound a little different, the message has not changed. God’s Word is alive and true — just like Jesus promised: *Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.*”

## Wrap-Up & Challenge

- Recite Matthew 24:35 together.

- Takeaway: “God’s Word in every language.”
- Challenge: “This week, look up your favorite verse in two different Bible versions. Notice what’s the same and what’s a little different, and talk about it with your family or small group.”