MOO ON BIBLE TRANSLATION

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Category: Quotes

The Proclamation Trust blog has four nice, concise points about Bible translation taken from a talk by Douglas Moo (you can find the whole presentation here):

- *it is important to read theology out of the text rather than the temptation to read it into the text*
- *all translations have to think about meaning - you can't simply translate words. A literal Bible is not, by definition, a more accurate Bible*
- *translation is important because translation is a form of communication; therefore you always have to be askingÂ for whomÂ you are translating (all preachers should be thinking this way)*
- *the general and steep decline in the ability to read and comprehend has huge implications for Christianity given that it is based on the interpretation of a book. Churches have not really begun to grapple with this sea-change*

The only point which I think needs comment is the final one. Moo is dead right to highlight the way in which we can no longer assume that people (in the western world) are fluent readers, able to handle a text as complex as the Bible. It is also true that Churches in the West have not really begun to get to grips with this issue. However, those of us working in Bible translation and church-planting around the world have been wrestling with this issue for many years and there is a huge body of experience and literature that the western church could tap into. I fear, however, that Churches in Europe and North-America would prefer to reinvent the wheel, rather than build on the experience of others.