# THE BIBLE: TRIBES AND INSTRUCTIONS

*Posted on October 2, 2014 by Eddie*

Three blog posts on the Bible that you may well want to read. Who reads what? How should you read it? and What on Earth?!
**Category:** Observations

This morning, I'd like to point you in the direction of some recent,Â thought-provoking blog posts about the Bible. They deal with important issue and a couple of themÂ have controversialÂ bullet point lists to get their ideas over.

Scott McKnight has written a fascinating piece on the way that English language translations have been adopted by different groupings or tribes.

> *The Bible you carry is a political act. By â€œBibleâ€ I mean the Translation of the Bible you carry is a political act. Because the Bible you carry is a political act the rhetoric about other translations is more politics than it is reality. The reality is that the major Bible translations in use today are all good, and beyond good, translations. There is no longer a â€œbestâ€ translation but instead a basket full of exceptional translations.*
>
> *The world in which we live, however, has turned the Bible you carry into politics.*

He then goes on to list some of the different tribes that use various translations.

> *The NIV 2011 is the Bible of conservative evangelicals.*
> *The NLT is the Bible of conservative evangelicals.*
> *The TNIV is the Bible of egalitarian evangelicals.*
> *The ESV is the Bible of complementarian conservative evangelicals.*

I'm not sure that this sort of list holds true in the UK, where Bible choice is less of a divisive issue than it is in the US, but if you take it as a generalisation, there is certainly some truth in it.

Just a couple of thoughts:

- There are places in the world where carrying a Bible is truly a political act; one for which you may well risk your life. There are governments who would have no hesitation to punish anyone who had the temerity to be found owning or reading a Bible. Equally, there are places which would allow you to have a Bible, but only in the majority or national language, not in your own mother tongue. All of this puts our 'Bible wars' into some sort of perspective.
- Meanwhile, as we argue about which English translation is the best, there are millions of people who don't have access to a single word of Scripture in their own language. Isn't it about time we stopped being so introspective and got with God's program?

Meanwhile, over atÂ thinktheology.org they have started a blog series on how to read the Bible. The first post starts with the wonderful quote:

> *#1. The Bible is not a diet book, a dating manual, nor a set of bullets in a PowerPoint brief â€œfrom the Lord.â€*

The point is that we need to read the Bible as it was inspired, not as a list of ideas to solve contemporary issues. I've returned to this theme fairly frequently at kouyanet. However, what sets this blog post apart is the list of real books which treat the Bible as something that it very much isn't.

> *The Bible Cure for Cancer*
> *What Does the Bible Say aboutâ€¦ The Ultimate A to Z Resource to Contemporary Topics*
> *One Would Not Expect to Find in the Bible*
> *The Biblical Connection to the Stars and Stripes: A Nationâ€™s Godly Principles Embodied in Its Flag*
> *Get the Skinny on Prosperity: Biblical Principles That Work for Everyone*
> *Seven Secrets of Bible-Made Millionaires*
> *Weather and the Bible: 100 Questions and Answers*

I won't be adding any of these to my 'to read' pile.

The last post I want to mention is a gracious review by Mark Ward of what looks to be a completely bonkers book. If you have ever been impressed by the King James Only movement, you need to read what Mark has to say.