

“fy” in The Bible

This may seem like an odd title for a lesson, but I’m referring to the suffix, “fy.”

I’m not referring to FY, fiscal year, which is why I didn’t capitalize it in the heading. According to the Free Dictionary – “fy” means:

a verbal suffix occurring in loanwords from Latin, with the meanings “to make, cause to be, render” (*clarify; purify*); “to become, be made” (*liquefy*). Compare **-ify**. (a variation). It comes from the old French, [Middle English < Old French -*fier* < Latin -*ficāre*, frequentative derivative of *facere* to make, **do**¹] Nothing to complicated.

I had been thinking about this topic for a few days now and when I read this week’s CGG Weekly Essay Friday evening, it was confirmation to proceed in this direction.

Now there are numerous words that can fit into this category with various meanings but I’ll limit this to just three; Unify, Edify, and Glorify.

Unify

Unify simply means to “make or become united, uniform, or whole.” Outside the disunity that can trouble a congregation, one of the difficulties in trying to unify

God's people and His Church is the very written source of God's Word and just how many churches and Bibles are out there. If I may, I'll try and clarify and shed some light on the subject.

1 Cor. 1:9-13- "God *is* faithful, by Whom you were called into *the* fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; rather, *that* you be knit together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For my brethren, it has been declared to me concerning you, by those of *the house* of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, since everyone among you says, "I *am* of Paul"; or, "I *am* of Apollos"; or, "I *am* of Cephas"; or "I *am* of Christ." Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized into the name of Paul?

No divisions? Well, what has happened since the Apostle Paul spoke those words to the Corinthian Church is jaw dropping. According to the World Christian Encyclopedia (David A. Barrett; Oxford University Press, 1982) have estimated almost 21,000 denominations. The updated World Christian Encyclopedia (Barrett, Kurian, Johnson; Oxford Univ Press, 2nd edition, 2001) estimated at least **33,000**. "Denomination" is defined as "an organized Christian group within a country".

However, The Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary estimated **34,000** denominations in 2000, rising to an estimated **43,000** in 2012. These numbers have exploded from 1,600 in the year 1900. Is it any wonder, unity within God's Church is difficult? The variations are as bizarre as the numbers. From Methodists, Presbyterians, Catholics, Episcopalian to "Bapticostals" (Bapticostals?! Maybe they have a sliding board on their baptismal pool?), eastern and western distinctions, and a plethora of subgroups of each so-called denomination. So many different churches, but still only One God and One Savior Jesus Christ.

Even the Word of God has multiple choices. **2 Tim. 3:16-17**- "All Scripture *is* God-breathed and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; So that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work." A scriptural definition of the Bible. But just how many versions are there?

Today, the Protestant English Bible comprises 66 books, with the Old Testament consisting of 39 books while the New Testament contains 27 books. The Catholic Bible has a total of 73 books: 43 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament. It would appear that everyone wants to edit God's Word to fit their agenda. So, why Are There So Many Different Versions of the Bible?

The Bible was initially written in Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic. All current available Bibles were translated from these three original languages. The manuscripts were further classified depending on the translation philosophy to use: literal, dynamic, and free translation.

The Literal tries to keep the exact phrases and words of the original text. It is very devoted to the original manuscript, but it can be hard to read and understand. It keeps a regular historical distance. Examples are the Young Literal Version, The Holy Bible in Modern English, the New American Standard Bible (NASB), and King James Version (KJV). The Dynamic equivalent or thought for thought translation seeks to maintain a historical distance concerning facts and history. This Translation updates the grammar and writing style. A couple of examples are Revised English Bibles (REB) and the New International Version (NIV). Free translation speaks for itself.

Initially, the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, while the New Testament was in Greek. However, as there is a limited number of people who understand Greek and Hebrew languages, the Bible had to be translated into other languages. That is how the English Bible came into existence.

From biblical languages of Greek, Aramaic, and Hebrew, the Bible has been translated into very many languages. Currently, the full Bible has been successfully translated into more than 700 languages. The New Testament itself has been translated into over 1,549 different languages and there are over 50 English versions. 50!

Most of us have been using “A Faithful Version” since coming across it a few years back. Knowing the Author who worked on this version and his knowledge of reading and writing Greek added credibility to seeking the best translation. Placing the Old and New Testaments in their proper chronological order also makes sense. The appendices are loaded with valuable guidance, chronologies and commentaries.

Hosea 4:6- “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you from being as a priest to Me. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I will also forget your children.” When seeking God’s Truth and reading His Word, we want the best and most accurate translation available. Mistranslations can lead to misinformation. Chauncey used to use the King James and the Septuagint side by side, comparing any discrepancies. Hopefully, this will provide a brief insight on how far things have dispersed over the past 2000 years.

We must understand how confusing it can be for someone who answering God's calling (**John 6:44**). With our studying and knowledge, we will have a ready answer for those who are seeking God's Truth and way of life (**1 Peter 3:15**). It will help us to understand how important *unity* within God's Church truly is.

Psalm 133:1- "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Regardless of how many denominations there are and how many Bible versions there are there is still only One God.

Eph. 4:3-6- "Being diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. *There is* one body and one Spirit, even as you were also called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism; One God and Father of all, Who *is* over all, and through all, and in you all."

Eph. 4:13-14- "Until we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto *the* measure of *the* stature of the fullness of Christ; So that we no longer be children, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men in *cunning* craftiness, with a view to the systematizing of the error;" We know how clever the enemy is and he will do anything to disrupt, distract or confuse those God is calling. (**Rev. 12:9**).

Romans 12:4-5- "For even as we have many members in one body, but all members do not have the same function; Likewise, we, being many, are one body

in Christ, and each one members of one another.” (1 Cor. 8:6, 12:13). **Romans 15:5-** “Now may the God of patience and encouragement grant you to be likeminded toward one another according to Christ Jesus.”

Edify

Edify means to “make or become united, uniform, or whole”, *uplift*. Nowhere in any of the on-line dictionaries I searched did it say to judge, criticize or find fault with. Remember, we are shepherds and have not been given a judges robe just yet. It can be difficult to build those up around you and Andrea can tell you, for me this is a hurdle. Especially driving in Ft. Myers’s traffic this week. I was never much on crowd’s or traffic but bullfighting with vehicles is lunacy. I’m surprised that some of the drivers could breathe on their own.

Sometimes, having the proper perspective on ourselves will make achieving this goal a little easier. **Romans 12:2-3-** “Do not conform yourselves to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind in order that you may prove what is well pleasing and good, and the perfect will of God. For I say through the grace that was given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think with sound-mindedness, as God has divided to each one a measure of faith.”

It's not about us. Have you ever heard someone say "I" or "me" more than "we" or "us"? Or those who would rather be right rather than righteous? **Phil. 2:3-** "*Let nothing be done through contention or vainglory, but in humility, each esteeming the others above himself.*"

We are a new creation in Christ Jesus. **2 Cor. 5:17-** "Therefore, if anyone *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; the old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." **Eph. 4:22-25-** "That concerning your former conduct, you put off the old man, which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts; And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that you put on the new man, which according to God is created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Therefore, let each one put away lies *and* speak the truth with his neighbor because we are members of one another."

Romans 14:16-19- "Therefore, do not let your good be evil spoken of. For the kingdom of God is not a *matter* of eating and drinking; rather, *it is* righteousness and peace and joy in *the* Holy Spirit. Because the one who serves Christ in these things *is* well pleasing to God and acceptable among men. So then, we should pursue the things of peace and the things that *edify* one another."

Overcoming ourselves is one battle of the flesh that may take a lifetime to triumph. Being okay with being last in line or not getting recognition when *you* think *you* deserve it puts us in the spotlight. We shouldn't be throwing our arms out of socket for recognition of any kind. God wants us humble with a contrite spirit. **Isa. 57:15-** "For thus says the high and lofty One Who inhabits eternity; Whose name *is* Holy; "I dwell in the high and holy place, even with the one who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones," Do not be concerned, God has us covered. **Matt. 20:16-** "So the last shall be first, and the first *shall be* last; for many are called, but few are chosen." **(Mark 9:35, 10:31, Luke 13:30).**

Romans 15:2- "Accordingly, let each one of us please *his* neighbor for good, unto edification;"

We are also to edify the church. **1 Cor. 14:26-** "What is it then, brethren? When you assemble together, each of you has a psalm, has a doctrine, has a language, has a revelation, *or* has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification." **(1 Cor. 14:5, 12).**

2 Cor. 12:19. Again, do you think that we are making an excuse to you? We speak before God in Christ; and everything *we do*, beloved, *is* for your edification **(2 Cor. 10:8, 13:10).**

Eph 4:12- “For the perfecting of the saints, for *the* work of *the* ministry, for *the* edifying of the body of Christ” **John 13:35-** “By this shall everyone know that you are My disciples—if you love one another.” **1 Cor. 10:31-** “Therefore, whether you eat, or you drink, or you do anything, do all things to the glory of God.”

Glorify

To glorify simply means to “praise and worship (God): To give glory, honor, or high praise to; exalt.” So how we as mere humans to glorify Our Creator? We mortals can do nothing that would really impress Him that He could not do Himself. What does get God’s attention is living in obedience, obeying His Commandments, keeping His Sabbaths and keeping His Holy Days according to His Word, growing in the image of His Son (**Romans 8:29-30**). When we look at ancient Israel, they failed to live righteously according to God's commands. As the years passed, the people of Israel steadily grew more corrupt and farther from God; they were not glorifying Him in their actions as an example to the nations and peoples around them. Since Israel's witness was unrighteous, God was not being glorified! Thus, He removed His glory from the Temple as a sign of His displeasure. Morally corrupt Israel did not represent and glorify God to the Gentile nations with the fruit of righteousness, so God removed His glory from the Temple

in Jerusalem. But, when Israel repents and turns back to God and produces the fruit of righteousness in peace, God's glory will again brilliantly shine (**Ezek. 43:1-4**).

As His people, God expects us, the Israel of God, to reflect His glory in our attitudes and our actions as an example of righteousness to others. Especially to those in our own family of God. **Galatians 6:16**- “And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy *be* upon them, and upon the Israel of God. We are not our own for we were bought with a price. **1 Cor. 6:20**- “For you were bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” In this context, glorify means to honor, praise and magnify. We do these things in our bodies and our spirit and they are synonymous with our actions and attitudes.

We also glorify God when we bear good fruit. **Gal. 5:22-26**- “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, Meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law. But those who *are* Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts. If we live by *the* Spirit, we should also be walking by *the* Spirit. We should not become vain-glorious, provoking one another *and* envying one another.” Jesus tells us Himself that we are to bear much fruit. **John 15:8**- “In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples.” If we can overcome our flesh and these actions and attitudes produce the spiritual fruit desired, we will be glorifying

God in our lives. Living in this manner (God's way) produces peace. **Phil. 4:7.**

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.”

History has shown us the punishments and failures of ancient Israel when they failed to obey God. Due to their lack of obedience, there was no peace and judgment followed. The lack of peace leads to violence and decaying morals. Do you see any parallel with our nation today? How can we sow peace when we have such an immoral nation that is full of lies and contention? Add all the divisions among churches and the word of God, it's a wonder we're still here at all. Without the fruit of peace, righteousness will be practically non-existent. Just watch the evening news. Regardless of the condition of society, it is our charge and responsibility to sow peace. **James 3:18-** “Now *the* fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.”

God's glory is in the character and the presence of God in the person and work of His Son, Jesus Christ. **Heb. 1:3-** “Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His own power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high;” Jesus produced the fruit of righteousness and manifested the glory of God (**John 1:14**). By our own righteous conduct, edifying one another, being

unified in our faith and actions, we can reflect Christ's glory. **Phil. 1:11-** "Being filled with *the* fruits of righteousness, which *are* by Jesus Christ, unto *the* praise and glory of God."

Matt. 5:14-16- "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a mountain cannot be hid. Neither do they light a lamp and put it under a bushel basket, but on the lampstand; and it shines for all who *are* in the house. In the same way also, you are to let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works, and may glorify your Father Who *is* in heaven." Therefore, it is our responsibility to always do what is necessary to seek Him, obey His Commandments and live His way of life. This will enable us to glorify Him by fulfilling our responsibilities to Him.

Together in faith we unify, in lifting each other up we edify, by His blood our sins He will nullify, in truth the chosen He will sanctify, the righteous He will justify, as His we identify, in us a new creation will signify, the resurrection will certify, in obedience and for eternity our God we will glorify. Just a little play on the suffix "fy." Glory to God! Amen!

