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HOW NOT TO GET LOST IN TRANSLATION

When I was a missionary working in Asia, I looked forward to the occasional times when a guest speaker would be preaching in English at my local church. On one of those occasions the English church bulletin announced the guest speaker's topic as "Birds of a Feather." Curious, I

are simply not translatable. This point is probably quite obvious, but because many idiomatic expressions have become a part of everyday speech, we may not even notice them. For a presentation that will be translated, write it out or think it through in detail, looking for phrases that do not convey the plain meaning.

4. **Slang.** I am not referring to swearing, but rather to pop culture words, such as 'bro', 'sup?', cool, way out. Even in more formal speech, slang can creep in. Slang is current pop usage which is casual and perhaps not even fully recognized and understood by everyone, certainly not those for whom a translation is needed. It may work well with a youth audience in your own language, but rarely is it translatable.

5. **Proverbs.** Proverbs are very cultural and require knowledge of specific situations and language. Unless the meaning is very straightforward, such as many of the proverbs of Solomon, they are best left behind.

6. **Jokes.** Finally, avoid presentation titles

most. This will help the audience maintain interest and aid the interpreter who has to remember what you said, translate the concepts intelligibly into another language, and then say it. Be kind to her by keeping each segment short.

3. Remain engaged with the interpreter during the translation, showing interest by focused facial expressions, body language, and eye contact. These short breaks are not the time to plan what to say next.

The bottom line is that no translation is perfect. There almost certainly will be a few missteps. It is important, then, that both speaker and interpreter be patient with each other and enjoy the process.

Above all else, pray. The best translator of all is the Holy Spirit.