

## Understanding “Thee” & “Ye” (et.al.)

Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. (John 3:7)

### Preface

In the Bible, distinctive words such as “thee” and “ye” are used, whereas in the common speech of today, the indistinct word “you” is used instead.<sup>1</sup> However, God’s word is not given in the common speech of today, but is sharp, piercing, dividing, and discerning...

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)

God’s word divides both eternal things (soul and spirit), and temporal things (joints and marrow). As will be discussed shortly, God’s sharp word divides between even seemingly little things like singular pronouns (thou, thee) and plural pronouns (ye, you), resulting in some piercing and discerning that would be dulled by the generic indistinct “you”. Furthermore, God’s words are pure – every one of them, including “thee” and “ye”...

The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.  
Thou shalt keep them O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever. (Psalm 12:6-7)  
Every word of God is pure... (Proverbs 30:5)  
Thus saith the LORD ... diminish not a word (Jeremiah 26:2)

And, just like our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh...

who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens (Hebrews 7:26)

...so also are his words – holy words, harmless words, undefiled words, words that are separate from sinners and higher than the heavens. In fact, while God has exalted the name of the Word made flesh, wherein he says that he...

hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth (Philippians 2:9-10)

...God has magnified his written word even more:

Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name. (Psalm 138:2)

For if the written word of God cannot be trusted and believed, how can he (Jesus) of whom it is written be trusted and believed?

The point of the above preface is to address up-front in a general manner (before looking into the more specific contexts pertaining to this particular study) the hypothetical question, ‘What does it matter if “you” is used instead of “thee” and “ye”?’

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<sup>1</sup> This was already becoming the case even back in 1611 when the King James Bible was being prepared, under the providential care of the Holy Ghost. See the dedicatory epistle from the translators to King James as an example (noting the conspicuous absence of thou thee, thy, thine, and ye).

Understanding “Thee” and “Ye”, et.al.

The word of God is the sword of the Spirit, given with a sharpness that surpasses any other sword. *One* of the sharp aspects of God’s (s)word is the use of words like “thee” and “ye”. Since every word of God is pure, and we are commanded not to diminish ought from them (e.g., Deut 4:2, Jer 26:2), it would be disobedience against God’s word(s) to diminish even little (but distinct) words like “thee” and “ye” to an indistinct, generic “you”. “Thee” and “ye” and kindred 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronouns are words of God that provide sharp distinction between singular and plural. The following table shows these distinctions, with comparison to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronoun distinctions that are still retained in common English usage today.<sup>2</sup>

Personal Pronouns	1 <sup>st</sup> Person		2 <sup>nd</sup> Person		3 <sup>rd</sup> Person	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Subjective	I	We	Thou	Ye	He/She	They
Objective	Me	Us	Thee	You	Him/Her	Them
Subjective-Possessive	My	Our	Thy/Thine <sup>3</sup>	Your	His/Her	Their
Objective-Possessive	Mine	Ours	Thine	Yours	His/Hers	Theirs

The loss of distinction in today’s common (non-Biblical) usage can be observed in the second table below.

Common speech:	2 <sup>nd</sup> Person	
	Singular	Plural
	You	You
	You	You
	Your	Your
	Yours	Yours

Changing the Bible to use the indistinct 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronouns of common speech would dull the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. This dulling can be seen in the following examples from scripture by imagining the use of only the generic and indistinct “you” for the highlighted 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular pronouns (such as modern “bible” versions use). These examples show the deeper, richer, fuller understanding of God’s word that would be lost without the sharp distinction of “thee” and “ye”, et.al.

Example 1

Luke 22:31-32

- 31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:
- 32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

Note the distinction, relative to just using you and your. Jesus was saying that Satan desired to have you (all the disciples, not just Peter in particular). One can then note as part of a deeper understanding (lost in the modern versions) that Jesus said “I have prayed for thee” (Peter), but he did not say he had prayed for “you” (all of the disciples, which would have included Judas Iscariot). Satan succeeded in having Judas (John 13:27), so we can see that Jesus, though noting Satan’s desire to have all the disciples, did not say that he had prayed all of the disciples’ faith (Judas’ too) to fail not. He knew from the beginning that Judas’ faith *would* fail (if indeed Judas actually even had faith), and thus he would

<sup>2</sup> Though there is a move of late to diminish the 3<sup>rd</sup> person distinctions as well, but that’s a topic for another time.

<sup>3</sup> Thine is often used in the subjective-possessive when preceding a word that begins with a vowel sound, such as “thine eyes”, as opposed to consonantal words such as “thy will”.

not have prayed contrary to that. If he had, it would bring into question his Godhood in that it would have been a prayer of his to which the Father would have said no. Jesus always prayed according to the Father's will.

Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. (Luke 22:42)

### Example 2

John 3: 1-7

- 1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:
- 2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.
- 3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
- 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?
- 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
- 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
- 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

Note the distinction, especially in verse 7, relative to using the dulled "you" for thee and ye. Jesus was speaking to Nicodemus, saying, Marvel not that I said unto thee [*2<sup>nd</sup> person singular objective*]. But Jesus was speaking to him about the Pharisees (and indeed all men), saying, Ye [*2<sup>nd</sup> person plural subjective*] must be born again, to see the kingdom of God. Jesus was answering in reference to the "we" (Pharisees) of whom Nicodemus was speaking, as identified in verses 1 and 2. Jesus was saying to Nicodemus that the Pharisees – the religious rulers – were lost and blind and could not see the kingdom of God because they were not born again. Consider some of Jesus' words about the Pharisees (the religious rulers) elsewhere in the gospels...

- ye blind guides
- ye are like unto whited sepulchres, full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness
- ye hypocrites
- ye are condemned already
- ye have not the love of God in you
- ye shall die in your sins
- ye are from beneath
- ye are of the world
- ye are of your father the devil
- beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees
- your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness
- ye are full of extortion and excess
- within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity
- ye fools
- ye are as graves
- ye shall receive the greater damnation
- ye are the children of them which killed the prophets
- ye serpents
- ye generation of vipers
- 
- ye must be born again

### Example 3

1 Corinthians 4:6-8

- 6 And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for **your** sakes; that **ye** might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of **you** be puffed up for one against another.
- 7 For who maketh **thee** to differ from another? and what has **thou** that **thou** didst not receive? now if **thou** didst receive it, why dost **thou** glory, as if **thou** hadst not received it?
- 8 Now **ye** are full, now **ye** are rich, **ye** have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God **ye** did reign, that we also might reign with **you**.

What can we understand from this example, wherein a verse written in the singular is sandwiched between two verses written in the plural? Indeed, the entire chapter surrounding verse 7 is in the plural relative to the 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronouns. There may not be deep doctrinal significance in this particular example, but we can indeed see the sharp distinct divide. In verse 7 the context changes from the Corinthians (as a group) being puffed up, to each Corinthian (as an individual) being different one from another (not the Corinthians being different from, say, the Ephesians). And being different one from another, each individual person is to recognize that his differences are not of his own making, but are from God, so that no man should glory in himself.

### Example 4

Referring to the table on page 2 above, see in the following some of the usages of the various distinctive pronouns:

I:	<b>I</b> am the LORD thy God		
Me:	Thou shalt have no other gods before <b>me</b>	(Ex 20:2&3)	
We:	<b>We</b> are but a few of many		
Us:	as thine eyes do behold <b>us</b>	(Jer 42:2)	
Thou:	<b>Thou</b> shalt not be afraid for the terror by night		you? .....
Thee:	There shall no evil befall <b>thee</b>	(Ps 91:5&10)	..... you?
Ye:	<b>Ye</b> have heard that it was said by them		you? .....
You:	But I say unto <b>you</b>	(Matt 5:14&18)	..... <b>you</b>
He:	<b>He</b> went out again unto the Jews		
Him:	I find no fault in <b>him</b>	(John 18:38 & 19:4)	
They:	<b>They</b> shall surely be put to death		
Them:	Their blood shall be upon <b>them</b>	(Lev 20:13)	
My:	<b>My</b> beloved is mine		
Mine:	My beloved is <b>mine</b>	(Song 2:16)	
Our:	<b>Our</b> Father which art in heaven		
Ours:	Christ our Lord, both theirs and <b>ours</b>	(Matt 6:9 & 1Cor 1:2)	
Thy:	<b>thy</b> father hath killed the fatted calf		your? .....
Thine:	all that I have is <b>thine</b>	(Luke 15:27&31)	..... yours?
Your:	<b>your</b> eyes shall be opened		<b>your</b> .....
Yours:	the good of all the land of Egypt is <b>yours</b>	(Gen 3:5 & 45:20)	..... <b>yours</b>
His:	<b>his</b> visage was so marred more than any man		
His:	we are <b>his</b>	(Is 52:14 & Ps 100:3)	
Their:	<b>their</b> worm shall not die		
Theirs:	touch nothing of <b>theirs</b>	(Is 66:24 & Num 16:26)	

## So, What Does It Matter?

It seems as though God, in his infinite wisdom, has given us the means in these last days to recognize his actual Bible and to distinguish it from counterfeit or corrupt modern versions. Any version that *does not* have the 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronoun distinctions can be recognized as *not* being the actual *undiminished* word of God. While these distinctions do not *by themselves* identify a version as *being* the actual word of God (since more than one version *could* have them), they are *one* of the many distinguishing characteristics which, all taken together, point to which *one* version is *God's* version. The following is a sampling of *some* of the distinguishing characteristics identifying the King James Bible as God's actual word in the English language:

- distinction of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronouns – thou/ye, thee/you, thy/your, thine/yours  
[and internationally recognizable inflected verb endings that go along with them, such as
  - second-person-singular “-st/-est” – as in “Why askest thou me?” (John 18:21)
  - third-person-singular “-th/-eth” – as in “Any one that is of the truth heareth my voice” (John 18:37)]
- identification of the one that is fallen from heaven as Lucifer (not “day star” or “morning star” as seen in many modern versions).
  - Jesus is the day star (2 Peter 1:19) and the morning star (Revelation 2:28, 22:16), both of which refer to the sun (Psalm 84:11, Malachi 4:2)
  - Satan has succeeded in becoming like the most High in modern versions (Isaiah 14:12-14)
- unquestioned presence of Acts 8:37 and 1 John 5:7, and many other verses that modern versions variously omit or question
- identification of God's name as Jehovah (not Yahweh, or the un-translated YHWH)
- identification of hell (as opposed to refusing to translate words such as sheol or hades)
- identification of Jesus as the only begotten Son, not the only begotten God (ponder the distinction)
- reference to Easter (not passover) in Acts 12:4

As the perfect law of liberty, the Bible – the true Bible, God's actual word given to the English-speaking world in these last days – uses legal language, and therefore must be precise. Its precision can be seen in the distinction between the 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronouns. These pronouns elevate God's word above the common speech seen in today's modern versions, and when used in preaching or speaking God's word, these special pronouns will raise the antennae (so-to-speak) of all casual observers or hearers, making them aware that they are hearing something from above, something out of the ordinary, something that might be of God (whether or not they are inclined to like or accept what they hear).

In our own studies, we should pay careful attention to these 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronouns (as we should with all of God's words) as they can be critical to a correct understanding, and to a right dividing, of the word of God.

### Example 5

This example is only for those who may yet need a little help at putting away their modern version called the “New King James Version” (NKJV)

Read these verses (and contexts) from the NKJV, which diminishes the 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronouns from “ye” & “thee” to the generic “you”. Take a stab (using that dulled sword) at identifying who is being spoken of. Use the table that follows.

Exodus 29:42

2 Samuel 7:23

Psalms 104:35

Matthew 26:64

Luke 22:31-32

John 3:7

1 Corinthians 8:9-12

Galatians 6:1

2 Timothy 4:22

Titus 3:15

Philemon 21-25

	NKJV (generic)	Who?	KJB (distinct)	Identity	
Exodus 4:15	Now <u>you</u> shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth. And I will be with <u>your</u> mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach <u>you</u> what <u>you</u> shall do.	1 2 3 4	And ___ shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with ___ mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach ___ what ___ shall do.	1 2 3 4	Does the KJB clarify who is being referred to?
Exodus 29:42	This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout <u>your</u> generations at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the LORD, where I will meet with <u>you</u> to speak with <u>you</u> .	1 2 3	This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout ___ generations at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD: where I will meet ___, to speak there unto ___.	1 2 3	
2 Samuel 7:23	And who is like <u>Your</u> people, like Israel, the one nation on the earth whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people, to make for Himself a name – and to do for <u>Yourself</u> great and awesome deeds for <u>Your</u> land – before <u>Your</u> people whom <u>You</u> redeemed for <u>Yourself</u> from Egypt, the nations, and their gods?	1 2 3 4 5 6	And what one nation in the earth is like ___ people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for ___ great things and terrible, for ___ land, before ___ people, which ___ redeemedst to ___ from Egypt, from the nations and their gods?	1 2 3 4 5 6	This example will also highlight a danger with <i>capitalizing</i> pronouns – it’s not <i>always</i> obvious which ones refer to God, and in this case the NKJV was wrong with <i>one</i> of them precisely <i>because</i> they eliminated the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person pronoun distinctions.
Psalms 104:35	May sinners be consumed from the earth. And the wicked be no more. Bless the LORD, O my soul! Praise the LORD!	1 2	Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless ___ the LORD, O my soul. Praise ___ the LORD.	1 2	Here the NKJV omits the pronouns altogether, leaving them as implied only, such as “( <u>You</u> ), bless the LORD” or “( <u>You</u> ), praise the LORD.”
Matthew 26:64	Jesus said to him, “It is as <u>you</u> said. Nevertheless, I say unto <u>you</u> , hereafter <u>you</u> will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.”	1 2 3	Jesus saith unto him, ___ hast said: nevertheless I say unto ___, Hereafter shall ___ see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.	1 2 3	

Luke 22:31-32	And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for <u>you</u> , that he may sift <u>you</u> as wheat. But I have prayed for <u>you</u> that <u>your</u> faith should not fail; and when <u>you</u> have returned to me, strengthen <u>your</u> brethren."	1 2 3 4 5 6	And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have ____, that he may sift __ as wheat: But I have prayed for __, that __ faith fail not: and when __ art converted, strengthen __ brethren.	1 2 3 4 5 6	This is Example 1 above.
John 3:7	"Do not marvel that I said to <u>you</u> , ' <u>You</u> must be born again'	1 2	Marvel not that I said unto ____, __ must be born again.	1 2	This is from Example 2 above.
1 Corinthians 8:9-12	But beware lest somehow this liberty of <u>yours</u> become a stumbling block to those who are weak. For if anyone sees <u>you</u> who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? And because of <u>your</u> knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when <u>you</u> thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, <u>you</u> sin against Christ.	1 2 3 4 5	But take heed lest by any means this liberty of __ become a stumblingblock to them that are weak. For if any man see __ which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; And through __ knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when __ sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, __ sin against Christ.	1 2 3 4 5	
Galatians 6:1	Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, <u>you</u> who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering <u>yourself</u> lest <u>you</u> also be tempted.	1 2 3	Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, __ which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering ____, lest __ also be tempted.	1 2 3	
2 Timothy 4:22					
Titus 3:15					
Philemon 21-25					



("The Epistle Dedicatory")  
The Translators of the Bible wish Grace  
**TO THE MOST HIGH AND MIGHTY PRINCE**  
JAMES  
**BY THE GRACE OF GOD**  
**KING OF GREAT BRITAIN, FRANCE, AND IRELAND,**  
**DEFENDER OF THE FAITH, &c.**  
The Translators of the Bible wish Grace, Mercy, and Peace  
through JESUS CHRIST our Lord.

Great and manifold were the blessings, most dread Sovereign, which Almighty God, the Father of all mercies, bestowed upon us the people of England, when first he sent Your Majesty's Royal Person to rule and reign over us. For whereas it was the expectation of many who wished not well unto our Sion, that, upon the setting of that bright Occidental Star, Queen Elizabeth, of most happy memory, some thick and palpable clouds of darkness would so have overshadowed this land, that men should have been in doubt which way they were to walk, and that it should hardly be known who was to direct the unsettled State; the appearance of Your Majesty, as of the Sun in his strength, instantly dispelled those supposed and surmised mists, and gave unto all that were well affected exceeding cause of comfort; especially when we beheld the Government established in Your Highness and Your hopeful Seed, by an undoubted Title; and this also accompanied with peace and tranquility at home and abroad.

But among all our joys, there was no one that more filled our hearts than the blessed continuance of the preaching of God's sacred Word among us, which is that inestimable treasure which excelleth all the riches of earth; because the fruit thereof extendeth itself, not only to the time spent in this transitory world, but directeth and disposeth men unto that eternal happiness which is above in heaven.

Then not to suffer this to fall to the ground, but rather to take it up, and to continue it in that state wherein the famous Predecessor of Your Highness did leave it; nay, to go forward with the confidence and resolution of a man, in maintaining the truth of Christ, and propagating it far and near, is that which hath so bound and firmly knit the hearts of all Your Majesty's loyal and religious people unto You, that Your very name is precious among them: their eye doth behold You with comfort, and they bless You in their hearts, as that sanctified Person, who, under God, is the immediate author of their true happiness. And this their contentment doth not diminish or decay, but every day increaseth and taketh strength, when they observe that the zeal of Your Majesty toward the house of God doth not slack or go backward, but is more and more kindled, manifesting itself abroad in the farthest parts of Christendom, by writing in defence of the truth, (which hath given such a blow unto that Man of Sin as will not be healed,) and every day at home, by religious and learned discourse, by frequenting the house of God, by hearing the Word preached, by cherishing the teachers thereof, by caring for the Church, as a most tender and loving nursing father.

There are infinite arguments of this right Christian and religious affection in Your Majesty; but none is more forcible to declare it to others than the vehement and perpetuated desire of accomplishing and publishing of this work, which now, with all humility, we present unto Your Majesty. For when Your Highness had once out of deep judgment apprehended how convenient it was, that, out of the Original sacred Tongues, together with comparing of the labours, both in our own and other foreign languages, of many worthy men who went before us, there should be one more exact translation of the Holy Scriptures into the English Tongue; Your Majesty did never desist to urge and to excite those to whom it was commended, that the Work might be hastened, and that the business might be expedited in so decent a manner, as a matter of such importance might justly require.

And now at last, by the mercy of God, and the continuance of our labours, it being brought unto such a conclusion, as that we have great hopes that the Church of England shall reap good fruit thereby, we hold it our duty to offer it to Your Majesty, not only as to our King and Sovereign, but as to the principal mover and author of the Work; humbly craving of your most Sacred Majesty, that, since things of this quality have ever been subject to the censures of ill-meaning and discontented persons, it may receive approbation and patronage from so learned and judicious a Prince as Your Highness is; whose allowance and acceptance of our labours shall more honour and encourage us than all the calumniations and hard interpretations of other men shall dismay us. So that if, on the one side, we shall be traduced by Popish persons at home or abroad, who therefore will malign us, because we are poor instruments to make God's holy truth to be yet more and more known unto the people, whom they desire still to keep in ignorance and darkness; or if, on the other side, we shall be maligned by self-conceited Brethren, who run their own ways, and give liking unto nothing but what is framed by themselves, and hammered on their anvil; we may rest secure, supported within by the truth and innocency of a good conscience, having walked the ways of simplicity and integrity as before the Lord, and sustained without by the powerful protection of Your Majesty's grace and favour, which will ever give countenance to honest and Christian endeavors against bitter censures and uncharitable imputations.

The Lord of heaven and earth bless Your Majesty with many and happy days; that, as his heavenly hand hath enriched Your Highness with many singular and extraordinary graces, so You may be the wonder of the world in this latter age for happiness and true felicity, to the honour of that great GOD, and the good of his Church, through Jesus Christ our Lord and only Saviour.