

New Bible gives Jesus a 'Human' touch

13 JULY - In the newest English-language Bible translation to hit bookshelves, e-readers and online sites, Jesus is no longer the "Son of Man."

He's "the Human One."

The Tennessean religion reporter Bob Smietana tours the text, pointing out notable changes in the freshly published *Common English Bible* starting in the beginning. Except that "In the beginning..." is gone, too. This Bible begins, "When God began to create the heavens and the earth..."

And Adam is simply lower case "human" until Eve comes along in Genesis 2:23. "The human said, "This one finally is bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh. She will be called a woman because from a man she was taken.""

Like every Bible translation that comes down the pike, the folks behind this -- a coalition of Protestant denominational publishing houses owned by the United Methodist Church, one of the nation's largest denominations, and the Disciples of Christ, Presbyterian Church U.S.A., Episcopal Church and the United Church of Christ -- want to make holy writ more accessible.

Accessibility is one of those umbrella terms that can cover a lot of ground. It's more than just dropping words that have lost their original meaning like the *New American Bible*, the Catholic Bible that booted out "booty" since "treasure" was not what came to mind. It can also include "inclusive language" that bumps out gender pronouns wherever possible and political sensitivities such as swapping of terms like "foreigner" for "immigrant."

Paul Franklyn, associate publisher of the *Common English Bible*, tells Smietana, "There are a number of translations available for conservative churches. This is trying to make a bridge between conservatives, moderates and liberals."

Smietana had some fun with this with a quiz testing Bible mavens on five top texts including the King James Version, the Common English Bible, the New Revised Standard Version, the New International Version and the English Standard Version.

Of course, King James intended his majestic Bible to unify English-speaking believers. That didn't work for him 400 years ago. And in new translations theology and poetry often take a beating -- depending on your spiritual perspective.