

You Can Read The Greek The Easy Way

By Edward Kurath

Introduction

The writers of the Epistles of the New Testament were anointed by God as they wrote. He was speaking through them.

I wanted a closer walk with God, and I became curious as to what He really said through them. So, I learned how to read the Greek.

I was blown away by the Lord's presence in what they wrote. The Lord met me in a way I had never experienced before. I can never go back to reading an English translation. They are now all so shallow in comparison.

And because of the tools now available, I found that reading the Greek was much easier than I had imagined.

If you would like to experience a greater level of the Lord's presence in the New Testament, I would encourage you to do your own reading of the Greek. I will show you how you can do it quite easily.

What I am including in this booklet is just a starting place. I have no doubt the Lord will grow you well beyond it.

Be blessed by His ministry to you through what He really said to the churches.

My Journey Into Translating

Ever since I gave my life to Jesus, I have had a strong desire to know what the Bible really says. I have many translations, and sometimes they say different things from each other. I began to wonder what the Apostles actually meant in the Greek, so I took a semester of New Testament Greek at Moody Bible Institute. It was by far the hardest course I have ever taken. It was hard for me, because rote memorization has never been one of my strengths. In the class we had to memorize vast amounts of vocabulary and word forms, so that we could translate out loud in class.

Despite this difficulty, I did learn what I was looking for. Greek and English are so vastly different that when a translator wants to translate the Greek into smooth English, he has to do some interpreting. Then, unavoidably, his theological views are reflected in his translation.

I wanted to know what the Lord inspired the Apostles to say, not what someone else thought they said. The only way to do that was to find some way to read the Greek for myself. That was a dilemma for me, because I had found out that I had trouble memorizing all that stuff. So, I began to look for a way for me to be able to translate the Greek without all that memorization.

I found it! And that is what I want to share with you.

More About The Problem

As I began to translate using the resources I had found, I discovered passages that had been inaccurately translated. The first one was Hebrews 12:14, which is translated as: “Pursue peace with all *people*, and holiness.”¹ The word “people” is not in the Greek! Admittedly, this translation puts “people” in italics, to tell the reader it had been added; but I never really noticed it before. In context, the Greek was saying that we should pursue peace with all that the author had been talking about in the previous 9 verses – the process of our transformation: “that we may be partakers of His holiness,” verse 12:10. When we have become a partaker of His holiness, we will be at peace. Pursuing peace with all people would put us into striving to get along, rather than pursuing holiness. Huge difference.

Another perhaps more subtle error is in Galatians 2:16.

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law (NKJV).

In two places where the typical translation has “faith in Jesus Christ” and “faith in Christ,” the Greek clearly says “faith of Jesus Christ” and “faith of Christ.” This is not an unimportant distinction. In English the difference is only one word, “in” or “of.” However, in Greek in the first example, “faith,” “Jesus,” and “Christ” are all in what is called the “genitive” case. The same is true of “faith of Christ. The genitive case means possession, so the Greek grammar demands that the English show possession; which means it should be “of Christ.” The important thing to see is that Paul meant to say that the faith was “of Christ.” He is the possessor of it. It is His.

Why does this matter? The difference is profound. If we are to have “faith in Christ,” this means that we have to do something to have it. Somehow, we need to generate it. If we are to have “faith of Christ,” we are to have the faith that is His, and it comes from Him. He is the possessor and originator of it. The translation difference changes completely what our goal is. Instead of trying to do something to generate faith, we need to pursue His holiness. As we attain His holiness, then what is His becomes ours. My literal translation of Galatians 2:16 is:

*“yet knowing that a man is not **continuously being** justified (**passive**) **out of** works of the (*Old Covenant*) Law but through faith *OF* Jesus Christ, **and** we believed **into** Christ Jesus, that we might be justified (**passive**) **out of** faith *OF* Christ, and not **out of** the works of the (*Old Covenant*) Law, because **every** flesh will not be justified (**passive**) **out of works of the** (*Old Covenant*) Law” (bold added).*

A second subtle but profound meaning that the literal Greek gives is “believed into Christ Jesus” rather than “believed in Christ.” The Greek word I have translated as “into” is *eis* #1519, which is the direct opposite of *ek* #1537 used in “not out of works of the law.” The Greek word *en* #1722 would be required for the correct translation to be “in.” The meaning of *en* includes “with the primary idea of rest” (Zodhiates p. 579). But Paul chose to use *eis*, instead of *en*. *Eis* includes “the primary idea of motion into any place or thing” (Zodhiates page 521). *En* is static, *eis* is dynamic. So Paul chose a word that spoke of a dynamic relationship, not a static one. His word choice was very purposeful. He was inspired.

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all Bible quotations are from the New King James Version; not because it is any better or worse than others, but because it is a representative modern translation.

I give you these two examples to give you a taste of how rich is the Greek, and often how different it often is than your English translation. The Greek is full of these kinds of surprises.

Isn't that exciting?

The Western Mindset Blinds

In our culture there is a deep, pervading, subconscious view of life that the way to live your life is through your intellect and willpower - your conscious faculties. I will refer to that as the Western Mindset. This philosophy originated with Socrates in about 400 BC, and this is the subconscious underpinning of Western culture. Unfortunately, it happens to be untrue. The issues of life are below our level of consciousness (Proverbs 4:23).² Nevertheless the Western Mindset has thoroughly infected the Western Christian church. I would expect that most translators of our English versions are diligent, sincere Christians. Then why would they change the meaning of the Greek in their translations? In my opinion, they are not consciously aware of their Western Mindset bias; and as I indicated before, of necessity when translating from Greek to smooth English, the translator's theological view affects their translation.

Again, you need to do your own translating to avoid their bias!

A Huge Buried Truth

Jesus has provided for us **two** great, miraculous, spiritual gifts:

1. He has provided for us the only way that we can become children of God. This is a one-time event that occurs when we make Jesus our Lord. It is a miracle, and is one aspect of being "saved;" and the Western church is fully aware of this. That is a good thing.
2. He has also provided for us in this life. This is an ongoing process of us being transformed into the image of Jesus. This is another aspect of being "saved," and it is as much a miracle as is the first gift. It provides the only way that we can live a Godly life on earth. This is also referred to in the New Testament as "sanctification." The Western church is mostly oblivious as to how this can be appropriated. That is not a good thing.

Why is the Western church mostly oblivious as to how we can be transformed into the image of Jesus? The English translations we read have buried it. My two previous examples show how that occurs.

It is interesting that the Greek Epistles address the second great gift at least 5 times as often as the first gift.³ Because of this emphasis, I think that we can assume that the second gift is an important thing.

The only way you will discover this emphasis is by doing your own translating!

As both of my previous examples bring out, we need to become a partaker of His holiness through application of the second great gift. If the Christian church knew how to do this, and did it, the world would be beating a path to our door. They would see the amazing difference Jesus makes in a person's life; and being stuck in sin themselves, they would come so they too could be set free.

² Even science now disagrees with Socrates and our culture. In his book "The Developing Mind", psychiatrist and research scientist Dr. Daniel Siegel says: "Huge amounts of evidence support the view that the 'conscious self' is in fact a very small portion of the mind's activity. Perception, abstract cognition, emotional processes, memory, and social interaction all appear to proceed to a great extent without the involvement of consciousness. Most of the mind is nonconscious. . . To put it another way, we are much, much more than our conscious processes" (page 263).

³ If you are interested in the proof of this statement, in my book, "Exceedingly Great And Precious Promises" I do the analysis that shows that the second gift is referred to by the writers of the epistles at least 5 times as often as they refer to the first gift.

Being a prayer counselor, I became acutely aware of the importance of transformation into the image of Jesus. That is what struggling Christians need. It is the only cure for their emotional pain. The Good News is that the Epistles do explain how this can occur, and the bad news is that this has been hidden from our eyes because of mistranslation.⁴

I can tell you that the depth of anointing on the Greek is amazing. Doing my own translating has hugely enriched my appreciation of what Jesus came to do for us. If you have a deep desire to have the Apostles speak to you God's words for you, doing your own translating will profoundly enhance your faith.

A Daunting Task Made Simple

As I experienced in my own Greek class, learning New Testament Greek (referred to as Koine Greek) as it has typically been taught has indeed been a daunting task; and as a result, few Christians have attempted it. They have thus been denied the blessing that is present in the Greek.

It has been assumed by those teaching Greek that a person who intends to read the New Testament in Greek must memorize all the word forms and vocabulary. This means that you have to memorize hundreds of Greek words and thousands of word endings, and then be able to remember them all. And unless you are a linguistic genius, or spend a significant amount of your life reading the Greek on a regular basis, these memorizations evaporate.

If you were learning Modern Greek with the intent of living in Greece, this might be necessary. In a living situation you need to think on your feet as you encounter life, so you need to have everything memorized and available for instant use.

Translating Need Not Be So Daunting

However, the New Testament is of a specific size, and contains a fixed text. Therefore, if there is one person in the world who HAS memorized all this stuff, and will tell us about it, **we do not have to.** There is, and they have. Scripture4all.org has done this, and their work is available for free online. It is Resource #1 listed below.

Let me show you how to do this. Admittedly, to begin with you will be slow and will probably make some mistakes. But the most complicated part of the job has already been done for you. Having these resources makes the job very much easier. It will require some effort on your part, but 90% of the job has already been done for you.

I do not present myself as an expert in Koine Greek. I am probably like you in that I have a life, and I have a limited amount of time and effort that I can dedicate to translation. I do not know it well enough to pick up a copy of the Greek text and read it aloud. But for my purposes, I don't need to develop and maintain that level of skill. I have access to the works of people who do have that level of skill, who have dedicated their whole lives to learning and teaching Koine Greek. We all can piggyback on their knowledge.

Let me explain.

⁴ If you want to know more about how to experience this second gift, read my book "I Will Give You Rest." Much of the book is posted on my website, www.divinelydesigned.com and is available to read free of charge.

English And Greek Are Very Different

When translating the New Testament, by far the most complicated and difficult part of the job is to specify what function each Greek word is contributing to a sentence. This is called “parsing.” Parsing means: “**a.** To break (a sentence) down into its component parts of speech with an explanation of the form, function, and syntactical relationship of each part.

b. To describe (a word) by stating its part of speech, form, and syntactical relationships in a sentence.”⁵

In other words, is it a noun, a verb, an adverb, etc.; and what part does it play in the sentence? For instance, if it is a noun, is it the subject, is it first person, is it singular, and is it masculine? This is where memorizing Greek becomes very complicated.

One of the problems is that Greek is what is called a “highly inflected” language. What this means is that the form of a given word varies depending on how the word is being used in a sentence. English seldom is “inflected.” One place where English is “inflected” is in the use of personal pronouns.

In English, when using a pronoun as the subject of a sentence (the one doing the action) you use the following forms:

	Singular	Plural
First person	I	We
Second person	You	You
Third person	He, She, It	They

When using a pronoun as the direct object (the recipient of the action), you use the following forms:

	Singular	Plural
First person	Me	Us
Second person	You	You
Third person	Him, Her, It	Them

Whereas the noun “ball” is the same in every use, except we put an “s” at the end for plural. “Ball” is not “inflected.” **Most words in English are not “inflected.”** For someone learning English, it is much harder to learn all the forms of the pronoun than to learn the one form, “ball.”

Then in English how can we tell whether “ball” is the subject or the direct object?

As subject: The ball hit John.
As direct object: John hit the ball.

In English the word order tells us the difference: the subject occurs before the verb, and the direct object comes after the verb.

In Greek, the word sequence means nothing. Word order tells you nothing about the sentence structure. Usually, the most important words come first. Then in Greek how can you tell which is the subject and which is the direct object? The word **form** is different, in a way similar to the English personal pronouns I just listed. **All of Greek** is “inflected,” like the English personal pronouns. In English, if we were to write “The ball hit he,” we would know there was something wrong; because “he”

⁵ From <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/parsing>

is the form for a subject, not a direct object. But in this sentence “he” is after the verb, so is in the position of the direct object.

Why do I bore you with this? To explain why memorizing Greek is so difficult. In learning English, as illustrated above, you would have to learn 11 words to know the person pronouns, but only one word for “ball;” and in English most words only have one form (are not inflected). However, because in Greek the form of a word tells its function in a sentence, you would have to memorize many forms **for each word** so that you could know what its function is in the sentence.

Let me give you an example. In English what is called the “definite article” is “the.” **It is one word!** But in Greek you need to memorize the following “paradigm” for the definite article:

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Nominative Singular	ο	η	το
Genitive Singular	του	της	του
Dative Singular	τω	τη	τω
Accusative Singular	τον	την	το
Nominative Plural	οι	αι	τα
Genitive Plural	των	των	των
Dative Plural	τοις	τοις	τοις
Accusative Plural	τους	τας	τα

Note: Nominative means the subject of a sentence.

Genitive means possession.

Dative means “to, with, or in” depending on the sentence.

Accusative means the direct object of a sentence.

And since these forms are necessary to tell the function of the word in a given sentence, they must be memorized exactly, or you will get the sentence wrong.

I present this to you simply to illustrate how very complicated it is to memorize all the word forms in Greek. Instead of **one word in English** for the definite article (“the”), **there are 24 word forms to learn in Greek.**

The Good News!

Now that you are discouraged, I can tell you:

You don’t need to know any of this.

Why?

Because somebody else has done it all for you.

The following resources have all the information you need to get started:

Resource #1

The whole New Testament has been “parsed” for you! Parsing is the process of looking at each word and designating all the grammatical details about it. This is where the huge load of memorization typically enters in. However, somebody else has already designated what each word is and the functions it

performs. The resource I recommend for this is available for free at www.scripture4all.org.⁶ On their website, scroll down to “Interlinear Bible (PDF Format),” and then click “Greek Interlinear.” There you can choose the book and chapter you want to see. You can also download the PDF file to your own computer and print it out if you wish.

As an example, I have included a screenshot of one of their pages, Romans 8:1.

You will note that in the top line is the Greek in capital letters. The second line is the Greek in our alphabet. The third line is the Strong’s number of the word. The fourth line is where the meat is. There they have coded all the important grammatical information you will need. The first word in Romans 8:1 is Strong’s #3762, *ouden*. It is an adjective (a), nominative (Nom), singular (Sg), neuter (n). It is here translated into English as: “not-yet-one.”

Their coding is quite simple, and you can access it for free on their website.

The Greek scholars at Scripture4all.org knew the word form and then listed everything about it. That is why you don’t have to do all that work yourself.

Romans 8:1-2

8:1	ΟΥΔΕΝ ouden G3762 a_Nom Sg n NOT-YET-ONE nothing	ΑΡΑ ara G688 Part CONSEQUENTLY	ΝΥΝ nun G3568 Adv NOW	ΚΑΤΑΚΡΙΜΑ katakrima G2631 n_Nom Sg n DOWN-JUDGment condemnation	ΤΟΙΣ tois G3588 t_Dat Pl m to-THE-ones to-the-ones	ΕΝ en G1722 Prep IN	ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ christO G5547 n_Dat Sg m ANOINTED Christ	ΙΗΣΟΥ iEsou G2424 n_Dat Sg m JESUS	ΜΗ mE G3361 Part Neg NO
	ΚΑΤΑ kata G2598 Prep according-to	ΣΑΡΚΑ sarka G4561 n_Acc Sg f FLESH	ΠΕΡΙΠΑΤΟΥΣΙΝ peripatousin G4043 vp Pres Act Dat Pl m THEY-ARE-ABOUT-TREADING they-are-walking	ΑΛΛΑ alla G235 Conj but	ΚΑΤΑ kata G2598 Prep according-to	ΠΝΕΥΜΑ pneuma G4151 n_Acc Sg n spirit			
8:2	Ο ho G3588 t_Nom Sg m THE	ΓΑΡ gar G1083 Conj for	ΝΟΜΟΣ nomos G3551 n_Nom Sg m LAW	ΤΟΥ tou G3588 t_Gen Sg n OF-THE	ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΟΣ pneumatOS G4151 n_Gen Sg n spirit	ΤΗΣ tEs G3588 t_Gen Sg f OF-THE	ΖΩΗΣ zOEs G2222 n_Gen Sg f LIFE	ΕΝ en G1722 Prep IN	ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ christO G5547 n_Dat Sg m ANOINTED Christ
	ΙΗΣΟΥ iEsou G2424 n_Dat Sg m JESUS	ΗΛΕΥΘΕΡΩΣΕΝ EleutherOsen G1659 vi Aor Act 3 Sg FREES	ΜΕ me G3165 pp 1 Acc Sg ME	ΑΠΟ apo G575 Prep FROM	ΤΟΥ tou G3588 t_Gen Sg m THE	ΝΟΜΟΥ nomou G3551 n_Gen Sg m LAW	ΤΗΣ tEs G3588 t_Gen Sg f OF-THE	ΑΜΑΡΤΙΑΣ hamartias G266 n_Gen Sg f missing sin	ΚΑΙ kai G2532 Conj AND
	ΤΟΥ tou G3588 t_Gen Sg m OF-THE the	ΘΑΝΑΤΟΥ thanatou G2288 n_Gen Sg m DEATH							

⁶ Scripture4all is in Holland, and they make their work available for free as PDF files online that you can download. However, they ask for contributions; and it would be a good thing to consider making a donation if you use their resources. After all, the parsing they have done is the key resource you need to be able to do your own translating. Their name reflects their desire to make the Greek accessible 4 us!

Resource #2

Next, you need to have a way to understand the meaning of the Greek words. James Strong helped us with this over 100 years ago (1890) by numbering all the Greek words. “Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance Of The Bible” contains this. And by numbering all the Greek words he has simplified our job of identifying the Greek word in a sentence. The Scripture4all parsed New Testament includes the Strong’s number for each word.

Resource #3

In his concordance, Strong gives a brief definition of each Greek word. However, his word definitions are very brief, and sometimes don’t contain the nuances of a word’s definition. To get the meaning of Greek words I use “The Complete Wordstudy Dictionary – New Testament” by Spiros Zodhiates, which is coded to the Strong’s numbering system.

Because you can have at your side a Greek dictionary (or several if you choose), you do not need to memorize the Greek words and their definitions. You can look each one up as you proceed with your translation.

Resource #4

If you will use the first 3 resources, you will be able to translate most passages. If you get stuck, or need more information, I recommend that you get a copy of “Reading Koine Greek” by Rodney J. Decker. However, I do need to warn you that like **all Greek grammars, his emphasis is on memorizing all the word forms. But you can skip that part**, in order to get more details of how the Greek language is structured. The subject index at the back of the book is very useful for finding what you need. Doing further research in this way will help you to grow in your understanding of the Greek.

Resource #5

My book “I Will Give You Rest” is not necessary for you to translate the Greek, but it will help you to understand how to apply to your life what you have translated. Since Jesus came to take away our sin, and the Epistles of the New Testament tell us how to appropriate that and to be set free from what has us in bondage, this book will help you put the pieces together. Also, when your translation differs from the English translations you are used to, this book will help you to realize that often what the Lord has shown you in your translation is probably correct. You can read about half of this book online for free at www.divinelydesigned.com. Take a look and see.

There you have it.

Translating in the old way is almost impossible for most of us.

Doing it this way is very possible.

And it is SO rewarding.

Translation Suggestions

It does take time and effort; but with the resources that are available, it is not too difficult. And you get blessed as I have in doing this myself. **Translating is the most rewarding Bible study I have ever done.** To start with, you will find the translating to be slow going. But it is possible for you to do; and as you practice it, you will get faster. And you will discover pure gold in the Greek that was never captured by English translators. Truly, the writers of the New Testament were inspired by God, and they expressed their inspiration in Greek; which is so much more robust than is English.

When translating, it is important to recognize to whom the Epistles were written. At the time they were written, most people were illiterate, and the letter would have been read to them. Also, for many of them Greek was not their native language. So the writers would have written in a simple way, using the most common meanings of the most common words. Sometimes translators have created complicated and obscure meanings for passages in lieu of simple and common meanings. I suppose that usually this is to try to make their translation easy to read. However, it seems that sometimes they have resorted to this to prove something they want the passage to say rather than to just let it speak for itself. When translating, you should usually choose the most obvious and simple meaning. This is one reason why I believe most Christians are capable of adequately translating the Epistles. When it comes to Greek, you will have a lot in common with the first century listeners.

When you are translating, try to be open to what the Greek tells you. It is easy to let your prior experience with a verse influence you, but try not to let this happen. Also, do not let the English words scripture4all has inserted in their parsing influence your translation. I have found that sometimes their English is misleading. If you will be open to what the Greek actually says, sometimes you will be amazed at what you find. I have had that experience many times. In the Appendix there is a profound example of this regarding the two great “commandments” of Jesus.

When translating, I have found that it helps to have an existing English translation nearby. That way you do not have to re-do those portions that are correct, and in lots of places existing translations do get it right. If your translation of a given sentence differs significantly from the existing English translation you are using to assist you, that would be a good time to dig deeper. You may be right, but it is also possible that you made an error.

You can use any translation you like as long as it is only for personal use. If you are going to use your translation for anything except private use, pick an existing translation that is out of copyright. You can find a list of them on the internet, and usually they are available for a free download. In my translation I used the World English Bible. It is a recent translation, so the English is current. Even though it is copyrighted, the authors allow free use of it as long as you give them credit for it.

It may also help you to relax if you remind yourself that you are doing this for yourself. Nobody else need see your work (unless of course you decide to make it public). So you can play around, make mistakes, change how you translate a sentence, etc.

Greek Alphabet

<u>CAP</u>	<u>Lower</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Pronounced</u>	<u>As Pronounced</u> <u>In words</u>
A	α	ALPHA	(AL-fuh)	a as in f <u>a</u> ther
B	β	BETA	(BAY-tuh)	b as in <u>B</u> ible
Γ	γ	GAMMA	(GAM-uh)	g as in <u>g</u> one
Δ	δ	DELTA	(DEL-tuh)	d as in <u>d</u> og
E	ε,ε	EPSILON	(EP-sil-on)	e as in <u>m</u> et
Z	ζ	ZETA	(ZAY-tuh)	z as in <u>d</u> aze
H	η	ETA	(AY-tuh)	e as in <u>o</u> bey
Θ	θ	THETA	(THAY-tuh)	th as in <u>th</u> ing
I	ι	IOTA	(eye-OH-tuh)	l as in <u>i</u> ntrigue
K	κ	KAPPA	(KAP-uh)	k as in <u>k</u> itchen
Λ	λ	LAMBDA	(LAM-duh)	l as in <u>l</u> aw
M	μ	MU	(MYOO)	m in <u>m</u> other
N	ν	NU	(NOO)	n as in <u>n</u> ew
Ξ	ξ	XI	(KS-EYE)	x as in <u>a</u> xiom
O	ο	OMICRON	(OM-i-KRON)	o as in <u>n</u> ot
Π	π	PI	(PIE)	p as in <u>p</u> each
P	ρ	RHO	(ROW)	r as in <u>r</u> od
Σ	σ,ς	SIGMA	(SIG-muh)	s as in <u>s</u> tudy
T	τ	TAU	(TAU)	t as in <u>t</u> alk
Υ	υ	UPSILON	(OOP-si-lon)	u as in <u>u</u> nite
Φ	φ,φ	PHI	(FEE)	ph as in <u>ph</u> one
X	χ	CHI	(K-EYE)	ch as in <u>ch</u>
Ψ	ψ	PSI	(SIGH)	ps as in <u>li</u> ps
Ω	ω	OMEGA	(oh-MAY-guh)	o as in <u>o</u> ne

Greek Word Forms

You do not need to memorize these word forms in the Greek. As you are studying the coding in the scripture⁴all parsed Greek, you can refer to this listing as often as you need to. These definitions are primarily taken from “Hebrew Greek Study Bible” by Spiros Zodhiates, pages 1568-1571.⁷ If you want a deeper understanding of these word forms, you can refer to Mounce’s textbook, or look online.

Page numbers referred to below in parentheses are pages in “Basics of Biblical Greek” by William Mounce.

⁷ Zodhiates, Spiros, ThD. (1986). The Hebrew-Greek Key Study Bible. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

Nouns

Case

Nominative

Subject of sentence, doing the action. Sometimes the subject is contained in the verb itself (p.26).

Genitive

Possession. Key word is “of” (p.45).

Dative

“To, with, or in” the noun. To is primary if no preposition present (p. 45). When *en* precedes, it is “in.”

Accusative

Direct object of sentence, receiving the action.

Number

Singular

Plural

Gender

Masculine

Feminine

Neuter

Verbs

Verbs describe an action or state of being, (p.122). Note that “punctiliar action” is action that occurs at a single point of time (p.201).

Tenses

Note that in Greek “tense” can mean more than in English. In Greek it refers to the form of the verb, which may or may not involve time. **In Greek, do not confuse “tense” with “time” (p.126).**

Present

Involves continuous or repeated action

Imperfect

Only used in the indicative mood, and refers to continuous or linear action in the past time. It is to be distinguished from the aorist indicative, which conceives of an action in past time as simply having taken place, without further defining it.

Future

Is concerned with the time of action, not the kind of action, although the future by itself almost always refers to punctiliar action (occurring in a single point of time).

Aorist

Is used for simple, undefined action. In the indicative mood the time of action is usually past, as distinguished from the imperfect tense, which denotes continuous action in past time. Outside of the indicative mood, the aorist is to be distinguished from the present tense which indicates continuous action. Except in the indicative mood, the time of action of an aorist verb is, in all but a few cases, nonexistent.

Second Aorist

Same meaning as Aorist, but with different verb endings.

Perfect

Looks at an action as having been completed in the past but as having existing results. It has no exact equivalent in English, but it is usually best translated by using the auxiliary “has” or “have.” Example: “It has been written, i.e. It stands written.”

Pluperfect

Is like the Perfect Tense, except that the time is pushed backward, so that the existing result of the action was in past time. Usually the English auxiliary “had” is used to translate the pluperfect, although it is sometimes used for the aorist as well.

Mood (p.124)**Indicative**

Makes an assertion of fact and is used with all six Greek tenses. It is the only mood in which distinctions can regularly be made about the time when an action occurs.

Examples: he will go, they had said, she saw.

Imperative

A command to do something.

Subjunctive

Makes an assertion about which there is some doubt, uncertainty, or indefiniteness. It is closely related to the future tense, which helps point up the fact that often the uncertainty only arises because the action has not yet occurred. Often a Greek subjunctive cannot be rendered precisely into good English, but usually there is a way. Examples: I would have come, had you been here, let us go.

Infinitive

A verbal noun, and in Greek it has many more uses than it does in English, but its most common one is best translated by the English infinitive “to.” Examples: to see, to go, to throw (p.299).

Optative

Similar to the subjunctive, and somewhat rare in the New Testament.

Voice (p.124)**Active**

The subject does the action of the verb.

Passive

The subject receives the action of the verb.

Midvoice

The subject is acting so as to cause an effect in the subject’s own interest. The subject may perform an act directly upon itself. English does not have this voice, so it can sometimes be difficult to clearly convey this meaning in a translation.

Deponent

A word that is passive in its form but active in its meaning. See the comment on this in the Appendix.

Person

As subject:

First person	Singular I,	Plural we
Second person	Singular, you,	Plural you
Third person	Singular, He, she, it,	Plural they

As direct object

First person	Singular, me	Plural, us
Second person	Singular, you	Plural, you
Third person	Singular, him, her, it	Plural, them

Number

Singular

Plural

Gender

Masculine

Feminine

Neuter

Other Word Forms

Participle

A verbal adjective. It has a wide range of possible meanings, some of which can only be inferred from the context, but it is often best translated by the English participle, -ing. Examples: having gone, seeing the multitude, receiving the gift.

Postpositive

There are certain Greek words that in the Greek cannot be the first word in a sentence, but in English would usually be translated as first. Below is a list of them.

- δ ε** but, and (participle)
- μ ε ν** on the one hand, indeed (particle)
- ο υ ν** therefore, then, accordingly (particle)
- τ ε** and (so), so (particle)
- γ α ρ** for, then (conjunction)

As an illustration, you will notice that in the scripture4all screenshot, in verse 8:2, the Greek word *gar* (**γ α ρ**) appears as the second word, but would be translated into English as the first word: "For the law."

Breathing

This refers to how a Greek word is pronounced. Even though you probably won't be speaking the Greek, you need to understand this issue; because it changes where a word is in a Greek dictionary. "The rough breathing is a ' placed over the first vowel and adds an 'h' sound to the words. υ π ε ρ is pronounced 'huper'." (Mounce, p. 10). You will need to know this, because most Greek dictionaries, including Strong's Concordance, list υ π ε ρ **with the "h"** in front of it.

Appendices

Deponent Verbs

In most Greek grammar books these verbs are in the middle voice form, but were traditionally translated as being in the active voice. Recently this view has been challenged. The new view is that they are indeed in the middle form, and they are to be translated as being midvoice: the subject of the verb acting upon himself or in his own interest. These theologians believe that the idea of deponency, came about because of a misunderstanding of the midvoice. This misunderstanding resulted from the fact that English only has an active and passive voice but no midvoice. A major advocate of this new position is Jonathan Pennington. You can read about his view by typing into an online search engine: “Jonathan Pennington deponency.” I would suggest that when you are translating, when scripture4all lists a verb as midvoice or deponent that you translate it as being midvoice, not active voice. In scripture4all these will be listed as: mid, mid/pass, midD, passD, or midD/passD.

Aspect

In doing research online or in other text books, you may run into this feature of verbs, so I thought I should address it, as an aside. “The concept of aspect is often missing from traditional grammars because it is a contribution from the relatively new field of linguistics. Aspect is not the same as tense although it is related to it.” “The problem is that in Greek a tense carries two connotations: aspect and time . . . In this grammar, we use the term “tense” to refer only to the *form* of a verb (e.g., present tense, future tense, aorist tense), and we do not use the term to designate *when* the action of a verb occurs.”

“The **continuous** aspect means that the action of the verb is thought of as an ongoing *process*.”

“The **undefined** aspect means that the action of the verb is thought of as a *simple event*, without commenting on whether or not it is a process” (Mounce, p.123, 126).

The Two Great Commandments of Jesus

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” (Matthew 22:36-40 NKJV).

However, the Greek makes it clear that **these “commandments” are not commands to do something.**

Are you shocked?

Greek has a verb form for when a statement is a command, and that is the “imperative” mood. However, here and every other place in the New Testament where these principles of Jesus are present, they are in the verb form “future indicative.” This verb form is a statement of fact (the indicative mood) in the future. God would never command us to do something we can’t do. Only Jesus in us can do these things. These sayings are telling us that when we have been transformed into the image of Jesus, He, in us, will do these things. “Good fruit” can only come from a “good root” – Jesus in us.

The Greek word typically translated as “commandment” is the Greek word *entole* (Strong’s #1785). Typically this is translated as “commandment,” but it also means “precept” or “principle.” Since the verb forms here rule out a command, one of the other meanings must be correct. Since God is just, He would never give us a command to do something that we could not accomplish. In fact, if we could do these things in our own strength, Jesus died in vain. But rather these “principles” are talking

about who we are, not what we do. To the degree we are transformed into the image of Jesus, we can do these things as “good fruit” from the “good root” of Jesus in us. This eliminates striving, and rather substitutes seeking transformation into the image of Jesus.

As you can imagine, this is a hugely different meaning than you usually read in English Bibles, and usually hear taught. It seems quite clear that the fact that in the future we will be able to “love your neighbor as yourself” fits perfectly with God’s plan and desire to transform us through the blood of Jesus.

One Greek teacher admits that these “commandments” are in the future indicative, but wrongly claims they are said in an “imperative” sense, like a parent would say to their child: “You will go to school tomorrow.”

This is a great example of an educated theologian trying to make the Greek fit with their pre-conceived notion of what it should say. With the Western Mindset, the pre-conceived notion is that we need to do these things with our intellect and will, so they must be commands. Even the choice of the English word “commandment” for the Greek word *entole* tells you that the translator has no idea that Jesus is talking of transformation, and is trying to make this scripture fit his own Western Mindset. This also tells you how unaware the Western church is about the reality of transformation.

What Jesus is saying is that after you have been transformed into His image, you will do these things through His presence in you. It is not possible that Jesus is commanding us to do this, because that would be telling us to keep the law. The Epistles speak over and over about how the Law brings death, but the Spirit brings life. The Law and the Prophets hang on the truth of transformation (verse 22:40 above), because it is the only way we can live Godly lives. If we could do it ourselves, Christ died in vain (Galatians 2:21).

Since Greek does have an “imperative” mood that exists to tell us when a verb is a command, it would seem obvious that on something so profoundly important as what Jesus is saying here, the correct Greek would be used. And it was not a grammatical error by Matthew; because everywhere in the New Testament where the “two great commandments” appear, they are all in the future indicative.

The point is that one should accept the plain, obvious meaning of the Greek, and allow it to change your theology; rather than to change the obvious meaning of the Greek to match your theological view.

Doing your own translating is the best way to uncover things like this!

That is what I have done.