

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Interpretating and grammar Greek

Interpretating and grammar Greek - posted by Warrior4Jah (), on: 2005/8/2 18:45

Dear brothers and sister,

Lately I have picked up a book from David Pawson, I haven't completed it yet and am only in the second chapter so far. The author in this book asks himself the question if today's 'once saved, always saved' idea is correct. Before I saw this book I have been reading a lot of Bible texts where Jesus warns that only few will be saved. The apostle Paul also seriously warns for spiritual decay and death among Christians and these texts. And looking back on my life I roughly see 4 periods.

- 1) I lived for self and in sin and I didn't see.
- 2) I saw I lived in sin and could not break free.
- 3) The one sin which ruled my life got broken by Jesus, but I did not repent. God was not number 1
- 4) I have repented and the way how I live my life has changed. I still make errors now and then, but I try to put God on the 1st place.

I did choose Christ as my saviour for like a dozen times in 1-3 but only as of 4 I have the idea I am truly following God and saved. I feel like that I have been a name Christian in stage 3 and before and was not saved at all at those points.

Anyhow the author David Pawson writes this about verbs in the New Testament: (not exact quote as my book is in Dutch)

The Greek future tense points to something that is happening now and is still continuing.

*In Dutch and English these verbs are just translated and **read** as 'finished present time' (is this the correct term?)*

Let me give an example here: (this text was in his book too)

John 3:16

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

With the Greek grammar in mind we would read this:

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

And we have this text for example:

Eph 2:8

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

As I understand it, the text means this:

By faith we can claim (pretence?) through grace which is by we are redeemed.

So what if someone loses his faith? That person would not be given grace anymore and not be redeemed. If we check back at John 3:16 we see that faith is necessary to receive everlasting life. And if David Pawson is correct only through continuing faith.

This is where I need help from you dear brothers and sisters. I don't know anything about Greek, but if he is right this would mean a lot. Is there anyone with insight in this matter? And/or anyone who knows old Greek? (grammar)

Satan is on the run to bend the truth where he can and studying this is not without danger.

Eph 6:14

14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

These loins girt hold together the armour of a soldier.. I think this question of mine is vital (for me atleast) as the lion girt should be put on with truth.

Thank you for reading!
I hope that I haven't messed up my english.

God bless,
Jonathan

Re: Interpretating and grammar Greek, on: 2005/8/2 22:30

Hi Jonathan,

Before we go too far on this, could you tell me what you may have meant by

Quote:

----- "satan is on the run to bent the truth where he can and studying this is not without danger."

If you want to know about John 3:16, yes, that word for 'believe' is a "present active participle" ... making it "continuous a ction".

Did he say "future tense", you say ? Because it's not.

Most time, through out the N.T., words like "believe", "hear", "follow" are in that form of the grammar, making them continuous action.

I don't know the author you are reading ... no wonder why ... it's in "Dutch" :-)

Also this other quote I don't understand here ...

Quote:

-----Eph 2:8

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

As I understand it, the text means this:

By faith we can claim(pretence?) through grace which is by we are redeemed.

It's what you wrote about "we can claim (as in pretence)....

That's not what Eph 2:8 is saying. No pretense there.

Eph 2:8 is just stating "how" we are saved. By Grace, through faith.

It sounds to me, if I were to guess, that you've believed 'once-saved-always-saved', and that the grammar in this book th is guy has written is saying there are "conditions" to maintaining one's salvation.

Is that the case here ? And is that what you meant about "satan bending truth" ?

If I get to understand your position better, than we can go through more of the Greek.

For now, maybe you could give me a better idea of your views.

Thanks !

Annie

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/8/3 2:46

Quote:
-----If you want to know about John 3:16, yes, that word for 'believe' is a "present active participle" ... making it "continuous action".

Did he say "future tense", you say ? Because it's not.

Most time, through out the N.T., words like "believe", "hear", "follow" are in that form of the grammar, making them continuous action.

I suspect that David Pawson is trying to capture the force of the present participle preceded by the definite article which really implies 'the believing one'. In other words this construction does not have 'faith', as an event, in view; not it the past, present or future. It has, rather, the characteristic disposition of 'the believer'. John is referring to someone who 'is a believer'; believing is no longer something that he does at fixed points of his life.

In terms of your Greek evaluation above. It is not the present participle of the verb 'believe' that is under John's scrutiny, but the 'one' who has 'continuously believing' as a characteristic of his life.

I have tried to illustrate this previously on these threads by reference to the fact that in my early teens I gained a bronze medal for dancing, but no-one who knows me is ever going to think of me as 'ron - the dancer'. It was something I did, could still do and might even do in the future, but I am not to be characterised by these events. An individual might believe once in the past, and again in the present, and again in the future but this would not make him 'the believing one' as John's phrase might be expressed.

It is significant that John never uses the word 'faith' as a noun. It is most often the characteristic of an individual that John has in view. We also need to be sure, when quoting, John 3:16, that we carry into it the definition of faith from the previous few verses.

Re: - posted by AsliEren, on: 2005/8/3 3:54

I believe that faith must continue to the end to be saving faith. I believe this is scriptural too:

Hbr 3:14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;

This is an honest, genuine, and easily understood passage. I think once saved always saved believers can understand his truth that faith in Christ is for life. I remember back in the 8th grade when I had faith in Christ. To this day I sometimes wonder why my faith is not like it used to be that first day I put my trust in Jesus. It was saving faith because I was repentant and it inspired and spurred me on to good works and produced fruit.

I remember back to that day and think about my confidence in Jesus because of faith in Him and continue to this day to walk in that same faith in the Blood alone. Sometimes it's a pathetic attempt and sometimes better but I keep my eyes on the Blood so I don't try to merit my salvation and so I stay inspired to live in Christ and not for me. I was saved then and I'm saved now but the in between part I had a lot of reason to worry. The fear of God always brought me back to him like a cockroach running from the flames. I'm not yet at the point where I can give a particular theological stance but Jesus is the only way to the Father by His Blood.

Re: Interpretating and grammar Greek - posted by Manfred, on: 2005/8/3 6:03

Hello,

I don't want to get too involved here, but I feel that two things should be clarified concerning salvation. We believers are often confused because of some misunderstandings.

1) The three tenses of salvation

Have you noticed that in the Scriptures they are three tenses used when they speak of salvation: past, present, and future. And of course the meaning is different each time.

2) Salvation and rewards

A lot of the contention concerning whether we are saved once for all or not, comes from the fact that we confuse between salvation and rewards. The Scriptures cannot and don't contradict themselves, so we can't say that some verses say that salvation is forever and that others say that it can be lost.

The verse in Hebrews you quoted doesn't speak of salvation but of rewards, as the five warnings do in that epistle.

I don't want to expand, but just give a few thoughts.

Manfred

Re: - posted by AsliEren, on: 2005/8/3 6:40

Hey Manfred,

I don't mean to nit pick but I don't see the rewards your talking about. The whole chapter seems to be about salvation.

Re: - posted by Warrior4Jah (), on: 2005/8/3 6:56

Just a short reply in between. (still working on the other replies)

David Pawson did mention and wrote about the 3 tenses of salvation. But its good that you mentioned it now. I hope to be able to reply on the rest here this afternoon.

Re: - posted by Manfred, on: 2005/8/3 7:45

Hi AsliEren,

Quote:

-----I don't mean to nit pick but I don't see the rewards your talking about. The whole chapter seems to be about salvation

Well, I'm too surprised, many among us believers don't know anything about reawards; they don't even know that such a teaching is in the Scriptures.

But, rewards is one of the most important things in Scripture. It is typified in the Old Testament, and presented in the New. Let me quote one of the most important passage regarding this:

" For no other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any one builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw - each man's work will become manifest; for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work which any man has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.", 1 Cor. 3:11-15

This passage does not deal with salvation, but with rewards - how the Christian is to be rewarded at the judgement seat of Christ. At this judgement only believers will appear. And they will do so, not to find out whether they have lost or are going to lose their salvation, but whether they deserve to be rewarded for their lives or not.

The epistle to the Hebrews speaks solely of rewards, it is not implied there that those believers can lose their salvation, but whether they are going to be rewarded or not. Salvation is theirs, but rewards not yet; this explains the many exhortations we find in this epistle.

Manfred

PS: Perhaps you may want to start another thread that could be called: Salvation & Rewards. It is just a suggestion.

Re: - posted by Warrior4Jah (), on: 2005/8/3 20:39

Thanks for replying people!
Somehow my posts turn large quickly :-P
Manfred, I've replied on your post at the bottom of this text.

@ **Annie**, I will try to be a more clear about this.

Quote:

"satan is on the run to bent the truth where he can and studying this is not without danger."

The reason I opened this topic was to see if the author of this book got his facts straight.
He interprets text in certain ways I don't know is correct as I know nothing about Greek.
The question if 'once saved, always saved' is correct is important I think.
How many Christians have drifted off by false doctrine or wrong interpretations?
I don't want to end up following a bent truth which is nothing but a lie.

About the author, he's American if I'm not mistaken.
His book in English is called "Once saved, always saved?"

Well I hope I have translated the tenses and such right as its in Dutch in this book.
With Babelfish and a bit of fixing up it comes up with this:

Quote:

Even more interesting is the time in which this verb is used, since the Greek language is complete differently than English (or Dutch).
Sometimes the word 'faith' stands in the aoristus, which indicates a specific operation at a specific moment. In many key texts the word 'faith' stands in the present time. This point will play an important role in the rest of the book, thus I will give a complete declaration here.
The Greek present time is frequently indicated as an 'unfinished present time', because she refers to something what happens now, as a component of a continuing operation.
To transmit this connotation in English, you must add extra words: 'being busy' or 'remain'. When the Greek text states: 'he breathes', it means that therefore: 'he is busy breathing' or: 'he continues to breathe'.
In English 'present time' can lose its continuity entirely.

Well here are the texts again, but now more clear. :-)

Quote:

John 3:16
16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

With the Greek grammar in mind we would read this:

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

The point of the author is to show that this text originally means that only continuing faith will get you everlasting life.

Now **Ephesians 2:8**

Quote:

Eph 2:8
8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

The author writes this:

We are being saved by grace by means of faith. We put ourselves in this grace by having our faith trust on Jesus Christ.

So, if we have no faith in Jesus Christ we are not in this grace. Is this correct?

That would mean we are not saved at all.

If we would lose our faith we wouldn't be putting ourselves in this grace any more and end up not saved. Or..?

About me:

What I've mostly heard in the past that you would be saved from the very moment you choose for Christ. I don't know if I fit in 'once saved, always saved' now. But I doubt you are saved the moment you raise your hand in the air or say a quick prayer if you do not throw around your life, don't repent. How can people be saved if they don't show their choice by actually living it?

Why should we choose to accept Jesus as our personal Saviour if we have no clue of (our) sin towards God? The ultimate goal is to have the relationship between humans and God back as it should be and sin prevents that.

As how I see it at this moment:

When you have the Holy Spirit you are saved. (I mean the 'indwelling' here, not the 'totally being filled with..') Some people will have no/low or more/much reward in heaven according by their works which God will judge. (indeed the judgement seat of Christ). But nonetheless the people with little or no reward are saved. I like to see this 'no' or 'low reward' thing as putting your pound on the bank for example. The judgement seat is not only to give you reward (or make you very ashamed) but also to see what position in heaven you will be granted.

But I've read that a lot of people will not be saved at all. Would seem to me that those people have never repented which is nothing more than trying to follow Christ and having a relationship with Him, trying to put Him first in your life, hate sin.

An interesting text I found some weeks ago while reading the Bible was **Luke 17 verse 3 and 4**:

3 Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. 4 And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

Weird though, my Dutch translation doesn't mention the word 'saying, I repent' but 'when he has contrition.' I think the latter is more accurate.

So if we are to forgive our brethren when there is contrition won't Jesus only forgive you when you have contrition? So how can you accept Christ's forgiveness for your sin if you are not sorry for the way you live? If you don't feel the need to deal with sin? If you don't see why you can't walk in the ways of the world? Why do people accept Christ? And what sort of Christ?

Personally I think that a lot of people 'think' they are saved while in reality they are not. A great tactic by Satan would be making people think they are saved or let them believe false doctrine. I also think that most evangelizing is flawed and this has only been confirmed by listening to sermons on this site. Sometimes it's like they present a fake Christ. But that's a very bold statement to make.

Then we have a text like **Matthew 7:21-23**

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

The 'I never know you' part shows that these people never got to know Christ, never had a relationship with Him. This along with other texts show choosing for Christ is not using Him to get a ticket to heaven. It's also clear that these people tr

ied to reason that they where worthy to enter.

Now this; I can not imagine that anyone really reborn and having repented can turn away from God and head the rest of his life in the opposite way, abandoning Him. I can not imagine me doing that at all, not after all what happened. But it seems like its possible.

What I think is that those people who turned away from God where never really reborn.

But how is it then possible for people to do these wonderful works without the holy Spirit? Or did they have Him living inside them? If that would be true not everyone with the holy Spirit would be saved.

About Satan bending the truth, I think this is happening a lot nowadays. A good way to neutralize a Christian is to make him follow false doctrine. False doctrine is not truth and is therefore from Satan. How can lies lead to God? Therefore I think its important in general to check if my thoughts add up with Bible texts. I also believe there are no contradictions in the Bible.

I suppose you can shipwreck in faith but what would be the result? I don't know yet.

There are probably a lot things I don't know yet and if I have something messed up please tell me. It doesn't matter what I think or believes but it matters what God 'believes'. What God believes is truth. So I don't mind if you find error in my writings. I'm here to learn about God.

That's it for now, I hope you know a bit more about my thoughts now.

I hope you didn't mind this huge lap of text. :-)

@ **Manfred**, I know that scripture teaches about rewards.. but I haven't checked what texts are about rewards and what not. I think its good for me to check what texts are about rewards and what not as it might think get mistaken easily. I have to admit that if I would just read that text in **Hebrews 4:13** I would think its about salvation.

When any of you open that thread about salvation vs rewards I will look into that one for sure. :-P

So far I haven't seen any errors in this book or it might be that my knowledge about the Bible is still lacking. Anyhow it doesn't mean that this book is correct if I don't find errors.

I'm only concerned about what God teaches.

And I'm only at the 2nd chapter at the moment so I don't know the conclusion of the author at the moment. It should be one that doesn't contradict with all of Gods teachings in His word.

Re:, on: 2005/8/4 1:07

Hia Jonathan,

I'm trying to sit here and just recover from your post.

Now wait ... don't get the wrong idea. Your post blew me away.

I don't read "words", but the "heart" of the one trying to express theirs.

You are unbelievable my friend. What a humble heart and what a teachable spirit.

How open to God and a fierce desire for "Nothing but the Truth".

Wow, I'm impressed Sir.

Your post may have been long, but I've been blessed, by such a spirit, Striving to only know what 'God' has said, for himself and not be stiff-necked by not being open to search, as a Berean for True Truth.

Anyhow ... there are truckloads of Scripture that I could give at this juncture, to prove out the "continuous action" of our faith or belief, but that may just turn your thread into a free for all, of the 'for and against', Unconditional Eternal Security again.

I for one, am not in for that discussion.

To me **John 16:13** is the way to go.

Read that book you're reading, and when you come to a question, type it into Google.

For one ... copy and paste these words into google ... Present Active Participle John 3:16

I believe you can do more with just an e-sword Bible program, or one like it and Google and Mostly the leading of the Spirit of Truth, then you can to ask the opinions of men....
because here or anywhere ... you'll get conflicting answers, and God holds us "personally" responsible to learn 'OF HIM, BY HIM'.

The bottomline is, God says in His Word, that what people believe is based 100% on "Choice".

The Holy Spirit is always testifying to TRUTH, but we have the free-will to say "NO, I don't want to believe that way. I like what I believe better." And then we "choose" teachers who believe as we do, to confirm and strengthen what we believe." *Period !*

All you need to do is sit at your table, with The Bible open before you and ask God, that through HIS Spirit, that "HE would lead you into All Truth". HE PROMISED HE WOULD. As long as we don't HOLD ON TO our preconceived notions, stubbornly.

Ask the Lord to show you, Through His Word, whether someone can walk away from God, after they had asked Him for Salvation.

That's all. And watch and see if Scriptures don't start POPPING out at you.

There was a time, when I would have posted 25 pages of Greek grammar, etc. to prove a doctrine of this type or another .

Now, the Lord has told me, in no uncertain terms "Point them to ME and MY WORD, and give them a HUNGER FOR THE WORD, because before Me, they are responsible, to allow MY Holy Spirit, to guide them into all truth.
I'm the One Who Died to provide My Spirit for them and My Word."

On this thread, if it continues, you'll get more answers than you'd imagine, but in the end, when we all stand alone before God, He'll tell each of us, singularly, "It was your choice, what you believed."
We won't be able to blame the guy or gal, that 'taught us' this or that.

It's a "personal" relationship we have with Him, because we are 'personally' responsible for whether we "learned HIS Voice or not".

He 'will' lead you into ALL Truth, if you solely depend on Him in the end.

"Test all things, Try all things"

Sorry for not 'answering' here ;-)

Much Love to you.

You're on the right track - of being OPEN to know Truth but be more open to HIS Voice, instead of the 16 million other voices out there.

Some other "present active participles" are in John 10 ... "My sheep are "hear-ing" My Voice and "follow-ing Me" ... continuous action of 'hearing' Him, then following. He'll never let you down, son of His.

God Bless you.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/8/4 6:21

Hi GrannieAnnie

You are obviously comfortable with the Greek. Do you have any comments to make on the fact that your present participle in John 3:16 is preceded by the definite article and its implications?

The transliterated Greek would be John 3:16 *OutoO gar eOgapeOsen o Theos ton kosmon, oOste ton uion autou ton monogeneO edoOken, ina pas o pisteuoOn eis auton meO apoleOtai, all echeO zoOeOn aioOn*. This section translated literally would read something like 'so that everyone 'the one' believing'. This form of the definite article plus the present participle is found eg in Matt 4:3 where it is translated 'the tempter' and in John 1:29 where the phrase 'which taketh away' could be interpreted 'the taker away'. Newberry has written that the 'present participle with the nominative' implies the 'doing one' or the 'do-er' reflecting permanent character. The John 3:16 has both words 'o pisteuoOn' in the nominative case.

I think David Pawson, who is a very well known English (not American, Jonathan.) bible teacher, is absolutely right in the implications he is drawing from John 3:16, (from the quote we have via babelfish) I do not know this particular publication but Pawson's work is always marked by scrupulous care and attention to detail. (Not that I always agree with him. ;-)) I suspect that what he is doing in this passage is dismantling the view that an individual 'act of faith' - the faith event - guarantees eternal security. I have tried to do the same in an article that Greg has made available here on SI called (<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/articles/index.php?viewarticle&aid14601>) Receiving Christ. (Jonathan, I did not know Pawson's view when I wrote this but I think you will find similarities)

Annie, (if you allow a Grandad using the familiar term?) you have written Some other "present active participles" are in John 10 ... "My sheep are "hear-ing" My Voice and "follow-ing Me" ... continuous action of 'hearing' Him, then following. He'll never let you down, son of His. I presume this is from John 10:27. Which Greek text are you following here? The Byzantine has 'akouei' which is a simple present tense. 'akolouthousin' could be read as either participle or 3 pers. pl. pres. indic: I think to match the akouei it is much more likely to be NOT present participles but the simple present tense. Certainly the Greek simple present tense is more akin to our present continuous, but the participle brings in a different feel altogether, particularly when following a definite article in the nominative case.

I think these are characteristics too of 'my sheep' rather than promises to them. In other words 'my sheep' are identifiable by the fact that they 'hear and follow'.

Re: - posted by Warrior4Jah (), on: 2005/8/4 9:26

Thank you for your kind reply **Annie!**

Really your reply is very helpful even though you didn't post 25 pages of Greek!

Yes I might get a lot of answers, but still I need His answer. Thank you for pointing towards that. :-)

A funny detail is that the church I go to is named 'Berea'. (Now does God have humour or what :-P) I also asked the man who God used to reach me on a biblecamp what he has been praying for me each day. He prayed that I would get into His Word, daily seeking Him wanting to know more and more about Him and really getting to know Him..

And now this reply from you, that's very special! :-)

Quote:
-----Now, the Lord has told me, in no uncertain terms "Point them to ME and MY WORD, and give them a HUNGER FOR THE WORD, because before Me, they are responsible, to allow MY Holy Spirit, to guide them into all truth.

I love you for saying that and I can really see that your reply has been based upon that! :-)

@ **philologos**, thank you for your reply! I've read the article and it does have its similarities with David's view.

Quote:
-----I suspect that what he is doing in this passage is dismantling the view that an individual 'act of faith' - the faith event - guarantees et

ernal security.

We can ask ourselves if we have the chance to live out our choice. There has to be a moment where you decide you will or need to follow Christ. I had them on given points.

I did discover that you can 'follow' Christ for various reasons, the right reason leads to fellowship with Christ and being urged to get into Christ.

However I felt unable to follow Christ till He broke my habitual sin which made me very unable to follow God at all. I feared God until then even tho I had moments where I chose for Him as I knew I was not following Him. When Jesus had set me free I could follow Him!

I don't know for sure if I still would be saved if I would go astray again (if I ever could at all), but I sure don't want to take my chances on that and live a life for self. (That just gets you into trouble) No, I will stick on God instead. And in case I sin again I know that Jesus will be fully able to forgive me if I repent that sin.

Walk in His Truth and on His way so He can bless your lives!