

Englishman's Greek

Chapter 8

THE GREEK VERB

1A. VOICE (How is the SUBJECT related to the ACTION OF THE VERB?)

There are three VOICES in Greek: ACTIVE, PASSIVE and MIDDLE.

1B. THE ACTIVE VOICE (very similar to English)

The subject does the acting. The subject produces the action.

Example: "John hit the ball."

Examples from the Bible: "I will build My Church" (Matthew 16:18).

Christ is the One who does the building.

See also 1 Corinthians 3:6 and Luke 22:54 for other examples.

2B. THE PASSIVE VOICE (very similar to English).

The subject receives the action.

Example: "John was hit by the ball."

Example from the Bible: See 1 Corinthians 6:11. You did not wash yourself. You did not justify yourself. You did not sanctify yourself. God did these things on your behalf and you benefited from God's saving action. Man does not do the saving; God alone can do that. But man can do the HEARING and BELIEVING (Ephesians 1:13).

Notice carefully the structural pattern in changing a sentence from active to passive:

Example: **Active sentence:** God (subject) leads (active verb) men (direct object).

Passive sentence: Men (subject) are led (passive verb) by God (Agent).

The object becomes the subject and the subject becomes the agent!

Important Doctrinal Examples:

1) **Matthew 3:11** (compare Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33).

He (the subject, namely Christ) **will baptize** (active verb) **you** (direct object) **with the Holy Spirit** (instrumental phrase, "with" [ἐν] may be translated "by means of" or "by the instrumentality of").

The Holy Spirit is the Instrument Christ employs to do His baptizing work, but Christ is here spoken of as the Baptizer.

Acts 1:5 (Christ speaking to His disciples):

You (subject) **will be baptized** (passive verb) **[by Me]** (Agent understood, but not stated) **with the Holy Spirit** (instrumental phrase) **not after many days** (not many days from now).

1 Corinthians 12:13 also speaks of Spirit baptism. Notice that the grammar is nearly identical to the other passages we have just looked at, though the order of the phrases is different:

With [ἐν] one Spirit (instrumental phrase) **we all** (subject) **were baptized** (passive verb) **[by Christ]** (Agent understood but not stated) **into one body** (the church).

This agrees with Matthew 16:18 which teaches that CHRIST is the BUILDER of the church! See also the following example (Acts 2:47)

For a more detailed explanation of the grammar involved in the Spirit baptism passages, see the paper entitled [Spirit Baptism and 1 Corinthians 12:13](#).

2) **Acts 2:47.**

The Lord (subject) **added** (active verb) **those who were being saved** (direct object) **to the church.**

Notice that the above verse contains an active verb. In the following verse the identical idea is presented, but a passive verb is used:

Acts 2:41 (compare Acts 5:14; 11:24):

About three thousand persons (subject) **were added** (passive verb) **[to the church] [by the Lord]** (Agent understood, not stated).

3) **2 Corinthians 1:22.**

God (Subject, see v.21) **has sealed** (active verb) **us** (direct object) [by giving us the Holy Spirit--see 2 Cor. 5:5].

Ephesians 1:13:

You (subject) **were sealed** (passive verb) **[by God]** (Agent understood, not stated) **with the Holy Spirit** (instrumental phrase).

Ephesians 4:30:

You (subject) **were sealed** (passive verb) **[by God]** (Agent understood, not stated) **with [ἐν] the Holy Spirit** (instrumental phrase).

4) Hebrews 1:2.

He (Subject--God) made (active verb) the ages (direct object) by [διὰ] Him (intermediate Agent, the Lord Jesus).

Who was the Creator?

Ephesians 3:9:

God (subject) created (active verb) all things (direct object) by [διὰ] Jesus Christ (intermediate Agent).

Colossians 1:16b:

All things (subject) have been created (passive verb) [by God] (Agent understood but not stated) by [διὰ] Him (intermediate Agent--Christ).

God the Father was the Creator, but He let Christ do the actual work as His Agent. God made all things through Jesus Christ (see John 1:3).

5) John 4:1.

Jesus (subject) baptized (active verb) disciples (direct object) more than John.

John 4:2

Jesus (subject) was not baptizing (active verb with negative) any disciples (direct object).

His disciples (subject) were baptizing (active verb) many disciples (direct object).

Therefore we can say:

Many disciples (subject) were baptized (passive verb) by Jesus (Agent) by [διὰ] His disciples.

Jesus was the BAPTIZER (John 4:1) but He Himself baptized none (John 4:2). He let His disciples do the actual work of baptizing. In the same way, God the Father let God the Son do the actual work of CREATION.

6) Matthew 1:22 (the doctrine of inspiration).

Which was spoken (passive verb) by the Lord (Personal Agent) through [δία] the prophet (intermediate agent).

The Lord was the Speaker but He used the prophet Isaiah to do the actual speaking. God spoke through His mouthpiece the prophet.

3B. THE MIDDLE VOICE.

There is no parallel to the middle voice in English; the middle voice is known only in Greek and Sanskrit.

Not only does the subject act, but he somehow **participates** in the result of the action. As A. T. Robertson has said:

The only difference between the active and middle voice is that the middle **calls especial attention to the subject**. In the active voice the subject is merely acting; in the middle the subject is acting in relation to himself somehow. What this precise relation is the middle does not say. That must come out of the context or from the significance of the verb itself.

1C. The Reflexive Middle (the subject acting on himself)

Examples: Matthew 27:5 (Judas not only acted, but he participated in the result of the action).

1 Cor. 13:8--"tongues shall cease (themselves)"

Warning: Don't equate middle with reflexive. This is a rare use of the middle. The normal way to make a verb reflexive was to use the active voice with a reflexive pronoun (as we do in English).

2C. The Appropriative Middle (the subject acting for one's self)

Examples: Matthew 20:22--"ye ask (for yourselves)"

2 Timothy 4:15--"you had better take heed (for your own good)"

A large number of middles (verbs in the middle voice) belong in this category.

3C. The Permissive Middle (the subject yields himself to the action of the verb)

Examples: 1 Corinthians 6:7 and Acts 22:16.

4C. The Reciprocal Middle (the subjects share the action reciprocally)

Examples: Matthew 26:4 and John 9:22

5C. Deponent Middle (very common)

A deponent verb is either passive or middle **in form**, but it is active **in meaning**. In other words, the translation of the verb seems to have an active sense, but the form of the verb is either middle or passive. The lexicon will often say whether a verb is deponent or not.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTION: The only safe way to determine the meaning of a middle verb is to look it up in the lexicon. Remember, **USAGE DETERMINES MEANING**, and the key question is: **HOW WERE THESE VERBS USED BY THOSE WHO SPOKE AND WROTE THE LANGUAGE?**

Exercises:

Change these passives into actives (the first one is done for you):

1. Acts 22:30--"He was accused by the Jews"
The Jews accused him.
2. Matthew 10:22--"You will be hated by all men"
3. Luke 23:15--"Nothing worthy of death is done by Him"
4. Ephesians 2:8--"By grace you are saved [by God]"

Change these actives into passives (the first one is done for you):

1. Luke 16:15--"God knows your hearts"
Your heart is known by God.
2. 2 Corinthians 5:21--"God has made Christ to be sin for us."
3. 1 Peter 2:22--"who did no sin"
4. Acts 12:2--"He killed James with the sword"

2A. MOOD (How is the verbal idea related to REALITY?)

Is the action or state of the verb conceived as **FACT** or is it conceived in some other manner (as **COMMAND**, **POSSIBILITY** or **WISH**)? How is the verbal idea affirmed? Is it affirmed as a simple statement of fact, as a command, as a possibility or as a wish?

English examples:

- 1) The boy eats (an actual statement of fact).
- 2) If the boy eats...(a condition, contingency)
- 3) The boy might eat (a possibility).
- 4) Oh, that the boy might eat! (a wish).
- 5) Eat boy, eat! (a command).

There are four moods in Greek but these may be classified into two essential groups: 1) **the mood of actuality** (that which is actual and real). This is the **INDICATIVE MOOD**; 2) **the moods of possibility** (that which is possible and potential). This would include the following moods: **SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD** (objectively possible, PROBABLE), **OPTATIVE MOOD** (subjectively possible, CONCEIVABLE), **IMPERATIVE MOOD** (volitionally possible, DESIRABLE).

1B. THE INDICATIVE MOOD (the mood of certainty and reality).

1C. The indicative denotes a simple assertion (a fact stated) or a simple interrogation (a fact inquired about).

Examples:

- 1) A simple statement of fact--John 17:17. Jesus said: "Thy Word is truth."
- 2) A simple question of fact--John 18:38. Pilate said: "What is truth?"

2C. The indicative states something as being true, but is not necessarily true. The speaker or writer presents something as true. Whether it is true is another matter. Remember, most lies are told in the indicative mood (see Matthew 26:72; 1 John 2:4 and compare **Mark 5:39**--a statement by Christ intended not to deceive but to shock those present, so that they would appreciate what He was about to do. The Lord woke her up, did He not? So, in a sense, she was asleep!).

3C. The future indicative is sometimes used to express a command (COHORTATIVE INDICATIVE). This is a common Hebrew usage (compare Deuteronomy 6:5-9).

Examples: See Matthew 22:37,39; Matthew 1:21 and Luke 1:13.

2B. THE SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD (the mood of probability).

1C. We have already studied the use of the subjunctive in conditional sentences (See **Chapter 7**).

2C. The subjunctive mood is used with οὐ μή (double negative or emphatic negative). We studied this in Chapter 6.

3C. The subjunctive mood (FIRST PERSON PLURAL) is sometimes used to express a command ("LET US..."). This is called the HORTATORY SUBJUNCTIVE. See Hebrews 4:1,11,16; 6:1; 10:22,23,24.

4C. In English, the subjunctive mood is often indicated by words such as "should, could, would, might, may," etc. Often the Greek subjunctive can be translated similarly. For example, in Luke 3:10 the people ask, "What **shall** we do then?" Since the verb is subjunctive, we may re-translate it as follows: "What **should** we do then?" Likewise, 1 John 1:9 may be re-translated, "If we **would** (or **should**) confess our sins..."

Exercise: In each of the following verses, find the key word which indicates that the verb is in the subjunctive mood:

Philippians 2:10; 2:15; Colossians 1:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:1.

3B. THE OPTATIVE MOOD (the mood for expressing a wish).

The optative mood is even less probable than the subjunctive mood. Also, it is used much less frequently than the subjunctive mood. The optative mood rarely occurs in the New Testament (less than 100 times).

1C. A common phrase in the optative mood which occurs 15 times (14 by Paul) is μή γένοιτο (KJV--"GOD FORBID") which literally means, "LET IT NOT BE!" or "MAY IT NOT BE!" It can also be paraphrased in this way "PERISH THE THOUGHT!" See Romans 6:1-2. Mary said the same thing in Luke 1:38, but she left off the negative μή: "MAY IT BE (γένοιτο) to me according to Thy word."

2C. The optative is used in 4th class conditional sentences (See Chapter 7).

4B. THE IMPERATIVE MOOD (the mood which appeals to the will).

1C. The imperative mood is most often used in giving DIRECT COMMANDS (compare 1 Thess. 5:16-22; Col. 3:18,19,20,21,22; 4:1).

Remember: The forcefulness of the imperative depends not upon the mood, but upon the authority of the one giving the command. When God uses the imperative, then it is an authoritative command. If a child tells his father to buy him candy, this would not carry much

weight or force, although the child would use the imperative mood ("Dad, buy me some candy!").

2C. The imperative mood is the mood in which we make our requests known unto God. See Matthew 6:10-11; Luke 17:5; and compare Mark 9:22. Certainly this does not mean that when we pray we are ordering God and commanding Him to do what we want! We are simply asking Him and requesting certain things of Him. The normal way to petition God is by using the imperative mood.

3C. Sometimes the imperative is used not as a command, but in a permissive sense. Consider these examples:

1 Corinthians 7:15--"permit him to go" **not** "order him out."

Matthew 8:31-32--"I'll allow you to **go**."

Matthew 26:45--"go ahead and sleep, if that is what you want."

4C. Sometimes the imperative is used in a conditional sense (although this is a rare usage). See John 2:19 ("destroy this temple"= "if you destroy this temple.") Jesus was not commanding them to kill Him!

5C. Thus, although most verbs in the imperative are commands, it is not correct to equate imperatives with commands. There are some commands which are not imperatives, such as the previously mentioned COHORTATIVE INDICATIVE and the HORTATORY SUBJUNCTIVE. On the other hand, there are some imperatives which are not commands (see the above points: 2C, 3C, and 4C).

3A. TENSE (What KIND OF ACTION is being expressed by the verb?)

Usually when an Englishman thinks about **tense** he thinks about **time**. In fact, the word **tense** is derived from the French word **temps** and the Latin word **tempus**, both meaning time.

In Greek, however, the great emphasis is **not** upon time. The important element of tense in Greek is the **KIND** of action.

Action as presented in the expression of a verbal idea involves two elements: 1) **KIND** of action (the action is performed in a certain manner); and 2) **TIME** of action (the action may be described as occurring at a certain time). In Greek, kind of action is the chief idea involved. Time is but a minor consideration in the Greek tenses.

There are basically three different kinds of action that may be expressed by the verb: 1) a continuing action; 2) a completed action; 3) a simple action (no indication of whether continuing or completed). Likewise, in its temporal relations (**TIME**), action may be defined as: 1) past, 2) present or 3) future.

Thus, we have the following possibilities as shown in chart form:

Time of Action → Kind of Action ↓		Time of Action*		
		Past	Present	Future
Kind of Action	A CONTINUING ACTION (Durative)	Imperfect She was talking to her cat.	Present She is talking to her cat.	Future (rare) She will be talking to her cat.
	A COMPLETED ACTION (Perfective)	Pluperfect She had talked to her cat.	Perfect She has talked to her cat.	Future Perfect (nearly extinct in the NT) She will have talked to her cat.
	A SIMPLE ACTION (Punctiliar)	Aorist She talked to her cat.	Present (rare) She talks to her cat.	Future She will talk to her cat.

***In Greek, time only has significance in the indicative mood.**

1B. CONTINUING ACTION--The PRESENT and IMPERFECT

The present tense describes the action as 1) going on, continuous or in process (durative idea) or it may describe action as 2) repeated, customary or habitual (iterative idea). Examples of the present tense:

- 1) 1 Peter 1:5--"who are **constantly being kept**"
- 2) 1 John 5:18--"whosoever is born of God does not **keep on sinning.**"
- 3) Ephesians 5:18--"**keep on being filled** with the Spirit."

Note: In the King James Version, verbs that end in "-th" are usually present tense verbs (although sometimes the perfect tense ends in "-th." Of course, there are many present tense verbs which do not end in "-th" as in examples 1 and 3 above.

The imperfect tense is the same as the present tense, except it presents the action as continual or repeated **in past time.**

Examples:

- 1) Mark 12:41--"and many rich people **were casting in** much."
- 2) Matthew 3:6--"they **were being baptized** by Him..."

2B. COMPLETED ACTION--the PERFECT

The perfect is the tense of complete action. That is, it views action as a finished product. There are basically two ways the perfect tense may be represented:

- 1) One example is 2 Timothy 4:7 where Paul says, "I have fought...I have finished...I have kept..." Here Paul is at the top of the hill with a backward look at the climb. He has run the race as he glances backward again. He's looking back at the race from the standpoint of one who has finished and completed the race. Compare John 19:30: "IT IS FINISHED!" (perfect tense).
- 2) Sometimes the perfect tense speaks of an action or event which was completed in the past, and the results are continuing. Example: 1 Corinthians 15:4: "(Christ) **rose again** the third day." Jesus has been raised and is still risen. Also in Luke 10:20: "your names **are written** in heaven." Before the foundation of the world, the disciples' names were written and their names are still there.

Thus the perfect tense presents action as having reached its termination and existing in its finished results. In other words, something happened in the past, and the results of that are continuing. For example: Acts 5:28--"Ye **have filled** Jerusalem with your teachings." The Apostles faithfully taught in Jerusalem and the result of this teaching was that the entire city was saturated with the knowledge of a risen Saviour!

3B. SIMPLE ACTION--The AORIST and FUTURE.

The word AORIST comes from the Greek word ἄριστος which means "**without limits, undefined, and hence indefinite.**" Hence the Aorist tense reports the simple occurrence of an action. It merely states that something happened; it tells you nothing more. It simply states the occurrence of an event. It sees the event as a single whole. When the Bible writer was using the Aorist he was simply saying, "it happened," nothing more. The Aorist says it in the simplest way.

Perhaps an illustration will help. The Aorist tense may be likened to a SNAPSHOT (still photo) taken of a man building a house. There is only so much you can learn from a snapshot. You can't tell how long he was working at it, or when he took a break or when he completed it. You just learn the simple fact that he was building the house. Of course, if someone took a video of this workman (representing the Imperfect Tense), then you would certainly learn much more about how the work of building actually progressed and how it came to completion.

The "snapshot/video" illustration is further amplified by Daniel B. Wallace in his Greek grammar textbook entitled *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, pages 554-555. He shows that the Aorist Tense does not necessarily mean "completed action" nor does it necessarily mean that

something has been accomplished once for all:

1. Aspect: "Snapshot"

This contrasts with the present and imperfect, which portray the action as an ongoing process. It may be helpful to think of the aorist as taking a snapshot of the action while the imperfect (like the present) takes a motion picture, portraying the action as it unfolds. The following analogy might help.

Suppose I were to take a snapshot of a student studying for a mid-term exam in intermediate Greek. Below the picture I put the caption, "Horatio Glutchstomach studied for the mid-term." From the snapshot and the caption all that one would be able to state positively is that Horatio Glutchstomach studied for the mid-term. Now in the picture you notice that Horatio has his Greek text opened before him. From this, you cannot say, "Because the picture is a snapshot rather than a movie, I know that Horatio Glutchstomach only had his Greek text opened for a split-second"! This might be true, but the snapshot does not tell you this. All you really know is that the student had his Greek text open. An event happened. From the picture you cannot tell for how long he had his text open. You cannot tell whether he studied for four hours straight (durative), or for eight hours, taking a ten minute break every 20 minutes (iterative). You cannot tell whether he studied successfully so as to pass the test, or whether he studied unsuccessfully. The snapshot does not tell you any of this. The snapshot by itself cannot tell if the action was momentary, "once-for-all", repeated, at regularly recurring intervals, or over a long period of time. It is obvious from this crude illustration that it would be silly to say that since I took a snapshot of Horatio studying, rather than a movie, he must have studied only for a very short time!

The Aorist is the normal tense to use in Greek unless there is some special reason to use another. If one desires to emphasize the notion of linear action on the one hand or the state of completion on the other, then the Aorist is not the tense to use.

Probably no tense in Greek has been as misunderstood as the Aorist tense, and it is at this point that great caution must be exercised. There are many who say that the Aorist Tense indicates "once for all, never to be repeated, instantaneous action." That this is incorrect can be seen from the following examples:

1) John 2:20--"During 46 years this temple was built (aorist passive indicative). Obviously the aorist does not here refer to an instantaneous event. It took 46 years! It was not an instantaneous, once for all, single act of construction!

2) 1 Corinthians 15:3--"Christ died" (aorist active indicative). We know that Christ died once for all, and that His death is never to be repeated. We know this, not from the aorist tense, but from the entire Biblical teaching on the death of Christ (for example, Revelation 1:18; Romans 6:9). In fact, the Greek language has a special word which means "once," namely **hapax** (ἅπαξ). This word is used in connection with the death of Christ in Hebrews 9:28 and 1 Peter 3:18. A related word **ephapax** (ἐφάπαξ) is even stronger and means "once for all." This word is frequently used of the death of Christ (Romans 6:10; Hebrews 7:27; 10:10). But in 1 Corinthians 15:3, the Aorist merely states the glorious fact that Christ DIED for our sins. To prove that the aorist does not in and of itself mean "once for all," compare John 11:14 where the very same verb is used of Lazarus: "Lazarus is dead (or Lazarus died)." Obviously Lazarus actually DIED TWICE! Thus, to convey a "once for all" idea the Bible writer may use the aorist tense (as in 1 Peter 3:18--"hath suffered") but the aorist tense does not necessarily mean "once for all" (as in John 11:14).

3) Dr. James Boyer has shown the folly of the popular misunderstanding of the aorist tense by giving the following paraphrased example from Luke 4:13: "And the Devil having completed once and for all every temptation, never to be repeated, he instantly went away from Him once and for all, never to come back, for a season." Obviously the verse does not mean any such thing.

4) Compare Luke 4:17--"when He had **opened** (aorist) the Book." Was this something Jesus did "once for all, never to be repeated"? Was this the last time Jesus ever opened the Scriptures?

5) Luke 6:3: "And Jesus answering them said (aorist)..." Was this the last thing that Jesus ever said?

The fallacy behind this popular misunderstanding of the aorist tense is the failure to distinguish between the event being described and the statement about that event. "I went to town"--that is a statement about a fact. It simply says, "I did it, it happened." Of course the event itself was a long series of events, a process that took half the day. But when I said, "I went to town," I was not interested in calling attention to these details. This is precisely the aorist tense in Greek; simple occurrence; a whole series perhaps of details and processes, but all concentrated in the thought of the speaker into a point-concept and the simple statement made, "it happened." Thus the aorist is the most colorless, the least distinctive of all the tenses in Greek. It is the catch-all tense which was used whenever there was no particular reason to emphasize duration or abiding result. From the viewpoint of exegesis a safe rule, perhaps slightly exaggerated, might be: WHEN YOU COME TO A PRESENT, OR IMPERFECT, OR PERFECT TENSE, DIG INTO IT AND SQUEEZE OUT OF IT ITS FULL SIGNIFICANCE. BUT WHEN YOU COME TO AN AORIST TENSE, TRANSLATE IT AS SIMPLY AS POSSIBLE AND FORGET IT. [Dr. James Boyer, *Grace Journal* (Spring 1962), "Semantics in Biblical Interpretation," p. 32]

The FUTURE tense is similar to the aorist, in that it refers to **simple action** in the future. Its general significance is indefinite (aoristic or punctiliar). This is due partly to the nature of the case, since all future events are more or less uncertain (from man's point of view). Thus the future tense expresses anticipation of an event in the future time. Notice the following examples of the future tense:

- 1) Matthew 16:18--"I **will build** my church" and Acts 1:5, "ye **shall be baptized**."
- 2) This is the tense of prophecy: Matthew 24:5-15 (note the oft-repeated word "SHALL").
- 3) This is the tense of promise: Philippians 4:7; 4:19; James 4:7,8,10, etc.
- 4) This is the tense of command (a Hebrew idiom): Matthew 22:37,39 (although the normal way to give a command in the New Testament is to use the imperative mood).

Tenses As Used in Imperative Commands

Commands (in the imperative mood) are given either in the present tense or the aorist tense. A present tense command would mean "Keep on doing something; do this continually; always be doing this; be doing this repeatedly." An aorist tense command would simply mean, "Do it!"

Examples of present tense commands:

- 1) 1 Thessalonians 5:16-22
- 2) Colossians 3:18,19,22
- 3) Ephesians 6:10

Examples of aorist tense commands:

- 1) Ephesians 6:11 ("put on"), 6:13 ("take"), 6:14 ("stand")
- 2) Romans 12:1 "present"
- 3) 1 Peter 5:7 "casting"
- 4) Ephesians 4:1 "walk worthy"

When a present tense command has a negative with it, it usually means "Stop doing this" or "Don't be doing this" or sometimes "continue not doing this" (forbidding a course of action). When an aorist tense command has a negative with it, it simply means, "Don't do it!"

Examples of present tense commands with the negative:

- 1) Ephesians 4:30--"stop grieving the Spirit" or "don't be grieving the Spirit"
- 2) Ephesians 5:18. If Paul's readers (the Ephesians) had been guilty of getting drunk, then it would mean "stop being drunk with wine." If they had not been getting drunk it would mean, "Continue not getting drunk with wine."
- 3) 1 John 2:15--"Don't be loving the world" or "stop loving the world."
- 4) Luke 7:13--"Stop weeping."

Examples of aorist tense commands with the negative:

- 1) 1 John 2:1--"that ye sin not" (in other words, "Don't sin!")
- 2) Luke 14:8--"don't sit down in the highest room"
- 3) John 19:24--"let us not rend it"

How To Determine the Tense of Verbs

For those who do not know Greek (and even for those who do!), there are various tools which will give you the tense of every verb in the New Testament:

- 1) *A Parsing Guide to the Greek New Testament* compiled by Nathan E. Han (Herald Press). This book is very simple to use. It lists all the verbs in the NT under the verses in which they are found. It will give you the tense, mood and voice of each verb as well as other information.

- 2) *Analytical Greek Lexicon of the New Testament* (to use this tool you must look up the Greek verb, and thus must have a good working knowledge of the order of the Greek alphabet).
- 3) There are various Bible software programs which will give you information on every verb in the NT.
- 4) *The Complete Word Study New Testament* by Spiros Zodhiates (editor), AMG Publishers. Very helpful and easy to use.

Exercises in Interpreting Tense

Try to explain the significance of the tense of the verbs in the following examples:

ROMANS 6:1-11

[Note: A number of verbs in this passage have not been translated very accurately in the KJV. For example, in Romans 6:6 "our old man is crucified" should be translated "our old man WAS crucified." For a literal translation of this passage from the Greek, see our notes on [Romans 6](#)]

- 1) continue-present
- 2) are dead-aorist (lit. "have died")
- 3) baptized-aorist
- 4) raised-aorist
walk-aorist
- 5) have been-perfect
shall be-future
- 6) knowing-present
was crucified-aorist
destroyed-aorist
serve-present
- 7) is dead-aorist (lit. "he that died")
freed-perfect
- 8) be dead-aorist (lit. "if we died")
believe-present
we shall live-future
- 9) having been raised-aorist
dieth-present
- 10) died-aorist
liveth-present
- 11) reckon-present

1 JOHN 2:11-13

- 11) hateth-present
walketh-present
goeth-present
hath blinded-aorist
- 12) write-present
are forgiven-perfect
- 13) write-present
known-perfect
have overcome-perfect

JOHN 14:3

- 3) go-aorist
- prepare-aorist
- will come-present (lit. "is coming")
- will receive-future

REVELATION 3:20

- 20) stand-perfect
 - knock-present
 - hear-aorist
 - open-aorist
 - will come in-future
 - will sup-future
-