

Asian Crescent

How to Study the Bible Conference

Basic Elements of Indo-European Grammar

We will be studying an English translation of a Greek text. While there are important differences between New Testament Greek and modern English, the languages are constructed and operate with basic similarity. You don't need to be a Greek scholar to understand the New Testament, but you do need to have a basic grasp of English grammar in order to understand accurately the English Bible. Here are some grammar terms we will be using in our study of scripture in this conference. Most significant for us are in ***bold italics***.

Parts of Speech

These are the building blocks of sentences.

1. Noun: names a person, place, thing, or idea
Examples: teacher, city, book, happiness
2. Pronoun: replaces a noun
Examples: he, she, it, they
3. ***Verb***: shows action or state of being
Examples: run, eat, is, are
4. Adjective: modifies a noun
Examples: blue, tall, happy
5. Adverb: modifies a verb, adjective, or another adverb
Examples: quickly, poorly, very, well
6. Preposition: shows relationship (place, time, direction)
Examples: in, on, at, under
7. Conjunction: joins words or sentences
Examples: and, but, because
8. Interjection: shows emotion
Examples: Wow!, Oh!, Hey! Behold! Greetings!

Sentences and Paragraphs

1. A sentence contains
 - a. ***Subject***: who or what the sentence is about
 - b. Predicate: what the subject does or is
Example: The dog (subject) barked (predicate)
2. A Subject may be a single noun or a phrase or a clause
3. A predicate may be a single verb or a phrase or a clause
Example: What we did in the airport made the security guards call for help.
 - i. Subject: What we did in the airport
 - ii. Predicate: made the security guards call for help
4. A paragraph is a group of related sentences that focus on one main idea or topic

Phrases and Clauses

1. A phrase is a group of related words that acts as a single unit in a sentence but does not contain both a subject and a verb.
Example: in the tree; after the meal
2. A **clause** is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb.
 - a. A sentence is a clause that can stand on its own
Example: Nic went to church
 - b. A dependent (subordinate) clause only makes sense within a sentence.
Example: after he ate breakfast
 - c. Clauses can be combined to express a more complex thought
Example: Nic went to church after he ate breakfast

Types of Sentences

1. Simple: one independent clause
Example: Nic went to church
2. Compound: two independent clauses joined by a conjunction
Example: Nic went to church and he sang hymns
3. Complex: one independent and one dependent clause
Example: Nic went to church after he ate breakfast

Signals of Causation

These words may sometimes indicate a **cause-effect relationship**, but not always!

For, because, since, so, therefore, thus, for this reason

Example: Nic ate breakfast because he was hungry.

Verbs

1. Tense: time of action
 - a. Present: Nic is singing in the choir. (now)
 - b. Past: Nic sang in the choir. (perhaps last Sunday)
 - c. Future: Nic will sing in the choir. (perhaps next Sunday)
2. Participles: verbs made into adjectives
Example: Nic is a singing lawyer (“singing” is an adjective modifying “lawyer”)
3. Active voice: the subject is doing the action
Example: Nic is hitting the ball
4. Passive voice: the subject is being acted upon
Example: Nic is being hit by the ball
5. Imperative: command. In English the subject (you) is often understood and omitted.
Example: Hit the ball!
6. Infinitive: the name of an action without specifying tense or person
 - a. In English usually formed with “to” in front of the simple verb form, as in “to go” or “to hit”
Example: Nic loves to sing

Koine Greek makes extensive use of participles. A literal translation into English is often awkward, so they are frequently rendered as dependent clauses.