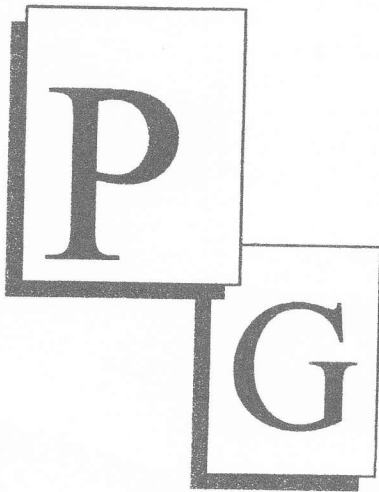


# **Greek Grammar**

**For Those Who Don't Know Greek**



By

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**Part 6**

## CHAPTER 25

## The Infinitive

To understand the infinitive is an overwhelming task for many. Nevertheless, the study of the infinitive is mandatory, and its mastery rewarding.

If you examine the first sentence of this chapter you will see one example of the varied uses of the infinitive. In English the infinitive is expressed by “to” plus the verb (*to run, to hit, to speak, to study*). Therefore it looks like a verb. But in the opening sentence, “to understand,” which certainly involves the action of thought or comprehension, serves as the subject of the verb *is*. “To understand” is naming the action that is the subject of the sentence. Thoroughly confused? Do not be alarmed, this chapter will help you understand the basic concepts of the Greek infinitive. Although much more could be covered in this chapter, this would overwhelm the novice who does not know the Greek language.

Like the participle, the infinitive is not a finite verb, it does not have a subject. The infinitive is called a verbal noun, because it has characteristics of both nouns and verbs. The infinitive may be used in any way a noun can (subject, object), but it also has tense and voice like a verb. It does not have number, gender, person, or mood. In the sentence, *Jesus came to serve*, “to serve” is a present active infinitive; in the sentence, *Jesus did not come to be served*, “to be served” is a present passive infinitive.

In English the marker for the infinitive is usually the word, “to,” but this is not always the case. However, the Greek student is not left to guess. Infinitives, like all other parts of speech, are marked with specific endings. For the non Greek student, the abbreviations in the analytical Greek New Testament make it even more certain. The abbreviation will look like this, VPAN, V stands for Verb, P, for Present tense, A, for Active voice, and N for iNfinitive. Remember, R in the tense column stands for peRfect.

**Exercise 25.1:** Identify the following abbreviations.

1. VAAN
2. VRPN
3. VPPN

### The Infinitive as a Verb

Like a verb, the infinitive may take an object or be modified by adverbs, and has both tense and voice. However, the tense does not indicate time, only aspect. The infinitive itself is timeless. The aspect may be aoristic (undefined, summarized), imperfective (continuous), or perfective (completed). When Jesus said, “I came to serve,” the present tense emphasizes continuous action during the first advent. At the first advent, Jesus came to serve, but at the future second coming Jesus will return to rule. Though the infinitive does not have a formal subject, the implied subject of the infinitive is the subject of the main verb. When the performer of the action of the main verb is different from the subject of the main verb, then the performer of the action in the infinitive will always be in the accusative case.

In the verbal use of the infinitive, the infinitive is usually completing the idea of the main verb or making a further assertion, *he came to serve*. “To serve” completes the idea in the main verb “came” by explaining the purpose.

#### 1. Purpose (aim or action) of the main verb.

- Matt. 2:2 For we saw His star in the east, and have come to worship Him.”  
“To worship” is an aorist infinitive indicating an undefined or summary purpose. The “we” is also the subject of the infinitive and shows
- Matt. 5:17 “Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.  
The infinitive is an aorist tense indicating undefined action, probably a singular event. The subject of the infinitive is the same as the subject of the verb, “I.”
- 1Th. 3:5 For this reason, when I could endure it no longer, I also sent to find out about your faith,  
This verse has two infinitives in the Greek, only the second represents purpose. The first, “to do,” in combination with the main verb, almost acts as a finite verb to indicate ongoing action. This is a complementary infinitive.
- Matt. 6:1 “Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them;  
This verse has two infinitives in the Greek, only the second represents purpose. The first, “to do,” in combination with the main verb, almost acts as a finite verb to indicate ongoing action. This is a complementary infinitive.

2. **Result** of the main verb [“that,” “so that,” “with the result that”]. The infinitive expresses the result or outcome of the verb to which it is related. The emphasis is on the effect of the action, intended or unintended.

- Rom. 1:10 always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you.
- Rom. 1:20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that [with the result that] they are without excuse.
- Col. 4:3 praying at the same time for us as well, that God may open up to us a door for the word, so that [with the result that] we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned;

The first “that” is a *hina* and subjunctive mood verb indicating the purpose of the prayer, the second “that” clause expresses the results of an open door, to explain the Gospel.

**3. Time;** the infinitive indicates temporal connection between the infinitive and the main verb [“before,” “while,” “after”].

- Matt. 13:4 and as [or while] he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up.
- Matt. 26:32 “But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.”
- Mark 14:30 And Jesus said to him, “Truly I say to you, that you yourself this very night, before a cock crows twice, shall three times deny Me.”

**4. Cause;** the infinitive expresses the reason or cause of the action of the main verb. In most cases this is expressed by a preposition *dia* and the definite article *to*.

- Matt. 13:5 “And others fell upon the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil.
- 2 Cor. 2:13 I had no rest for my spirit, not finding Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I went on to Macedonia.

This is the only time a dative infinitive expresses cause.

- John 2:24 But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for [*dia*, because] He knew all men,

**Usage as a noun.** Like a noun it has case relations, takes the article, qualified by adjective, accompanied by prepositions, used as a subject or object.

**5. Subject.** The infinitive expresses an action which is in return the subject of the main verb.

- Rom. 7:18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.

In this verse, “is,” is the main verb, “the wishing” and “the doing” are the subjects.

- Eph. 5:12 for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret.
- Philippians 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

**6. Direct Object** of a finite verb.

- Mark 12:12 And they were seeking to seize Him;

“Seeking” is the main verb; “to seize” expresses the direct object of the verb.

- John 5:26 “For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself;

The Father gave life, expressed by the infinitive, to the Son.

- 2 Cor. 8:11 But now finish doing it also; that just as there was the readiness to desire it, so there may be also the completion of it by your ability.

Literally, you finished the to doing

**7. Secondary object** of a verb. In this case, there are two objects of the verb, the first is expressed in the accusative case.

- Luke 7:40 And Jesus answered and said to him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” And he replied, “Say it, Teacher.”

“Something” is the first direct object, “to say” expresses a second object. One could also say, “I have to say” where the infinitive would then be the direct object of the verb.

- Luke 10:40 But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him, and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me.”

- Acts 7:42 “But God turned away and delivered them up to serve the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, ‘It was not to Me that you offered victims and sacrifices forty years in the wilderness, was it, O house of Israel?’

8. **Appositional;** As an appositional substantive the infinitive further explains or defines a broader category substantive. This can be clarified by adding “namely,” to get the sense of apposition.

- 1 Thess. 4:3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality;  
The clue here is “that is” where abstinence clarifies a subcategory of the broader “will of God.”
- Acts 15:28 “For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials:
- James 1:27 This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father, to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.  
“To visit” and “to keep” further define “undefiled religion.”

9. **Epexegetical.** The epexegetical use, meaning explanation, further clarifies, qualifies, or explains a noun or verb.<sup>8</sup> Some grammars call this a modifier or complementary infinitive.

- Romans 4:21 and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform.  
The infinitive “to perform” further clarifies the verb “was able.”
- 1 Corinthians 7:39 A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.  
The infinitive further qualifies the area of freedom.

**Exercise 25.2:** Identify and classify the infinitives in the following:

1. Phil. 3:1.

Philippians 3:1									
1	Τὸ	λοιπόν,	ἀδελφοί	μου,	χαίρετε	ἐν	κυρίῳ.	τὰ	αὐτὰ
	To	loipon,	adelphoi	mou,	chairete	en	kyriō.	ta	auta
	ὁ	λοιπός	ἀδελφός	ἐγώ	χαίρω	ἐν	κύριος	ὁ	αὐτός
	ho	loipos	adelphos	egō	chairō	en	kyrios	ho	autos
	The	remaining	brothers	of me	rejoice	in	Master	The	same
	ANSA	BX	NMPV	OP1SG	V2PPAM	PD	NMSD	ANPA	OAINPA
	γράφειν	ὑμῖν	ἐμοὶ	μὲν	οὐκ	ὀκνηρόν,	ὑμῖν	δὲ	ἀσφαλές.
	graphein	hym̐n	emoi	men	ouk	oknēron,	hym̐n	de	asphales.
	γράφω	ὑμεῖς	ἐγώ	μὲν	οὐ	ὀκνηρός	ὑμεῖς	δέ	ἀσφαλής
	graphō	hymeis	egō	men	ou	oknēros	hymeis	de	asphalēs
	to write	to you	to me	indeed	not	troublesome	to you	but	secure
	VPAN	OP2PD	OP1SD	TM	TN	JNSNX	OP2PD	CCV	JNSNX

<sup>8</sup> Black, *Still Greek*, 116.

## 2. Heb. 7:24.

Hebrews 7:24									
24	ὁ	δὲ	διὰ	τὸ	μένειν	αὐτὸν	εἰς	τὸν	αἰῶνα
	ho	de	dia	to	menein	auton	eis	ton	aiōna
	ὁ	δέ	διά	ὁ	μένω	αὐτός	εἰς	ὁ	αἰών
	ho	de	dia	ho	menō	autos	eis	ho	aiōn
	the	but	through	the	to stay	him	into	the	age
	AMSN	CCV	PA	ANSA	VPAN	OP3MSA	PA	AMSA	NMSA
ἀπαράβατον ἔχει τὴν ἱερωσύνην·									
	aparabaton	echei	tēn	hierōsynēn;					
	ἀπαράβατος	ἔχω	ὁ	ἱερωσύνη					
	aparabatos	echō	ho	hierōsynē					
	untransferable	has	the	priesthood					
	JFSAX	V3SPAI	AFSA	NFSA					

## 3. Eph. 6:11.

Ephesians 6:11									
11	ἐνδύσασθε	τὴν	πανοπλίαν	τοῦ	θεοῦ	πρὸς	τὸ	δύνασθαι	
	endysasthe	tēn	panoplian	tou	theou	pros	to	dynasthai	
	ἐνδύω	ὁ	πανοπλία	ὁ	θεός	πρὸς	ὁ	δύναμαι	
	endyō	ho	panoplia	ho	theos	pros	ho	dynamai	
	Put on	the	all weaponry	of the	God	to	the	to be able	
	V2PAMM	AFSA	NFSA	AMSG	NMSG	PA	ANSA	VPPN	
ὑμᾶς στῆναι πρὸς τὰς μεθοδείας τοῦ διαβόλου·									
	hymas	stēnai	pros	tas	methodeias	tou	diabolou;		
	ὑμεῖς	ἵστημι	πρὸς	ὁ	μεθοδεία	ὁ	διάβολος		
	hymeis	histēmi	pros	ho	methodeia	ho	diabolos		
	you	to stand	toward	the	schemings	of the	slanderer		
	OP2PA	VAAN	PA	AFPA	NFPA	AMSG	NMSG		

## Chapter 26

## Putting It All Together

Now that the various elements have been analyzed and their uses clarified the student must put it all together. Rarely does the student analyze merely one word. In this chapter an example of the procedure will be briefly developed based on James 1:2–4. By following this example, the student will then be directed to work on Phi. 2:5–8. A number of questions will be asked which will help the student see the methodology. For the most part, these same questions could be applied to the study of any passage.

Figure 26.1, James 1:2-3.

Figure 20.17, James 1:2-5.

James 1:2

2 Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἡγήσασθε, ἀδελφοί μου, ὅταν πειρασμοῖς

Pasan	charan	hēgēsasthe,	adelphoi	mou,	hotan	peirasmois
πᾶς	χαρά	ἡγέομαι	ἀδελφός	ἐγώ	ὅταν	πειρασμός
pas	chara	hēgeomai	adelphos	egō	hotan	peirasmos
All	joy	consider	brothers	of me	when	in pressures
JFSAX	NFSA	V2PAMM	NMPV	OP1SG	CST	NMPD

περιπέσητε ποικίλοις,

peripesēte	poikilois,
περιπίπτω	ποικίλος
periptō	poikilos
you might fall around	various
V2PAAS	JMPDX

3 γινώσκοντες ὅτι τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως

ginōskontes	hoti	to	dokimion	hymōn	tēs	pisteōs
γινώσκω	ὅτι	ὁ	δοκίμιον	ὑμεῖς	ὁ	πίστις
ginōskō	hoti	ho	dokimion	hymeis	ho	pistis
knowing	that	the	proof	of you	of the	trust
VPAPMPN	CSN	ANSN	NNSN	OP2PG	AFSG	NFSG

First, notice how many sentences are in these verses. There are two sentences; 1:2–3 and 1:4 (only 1:2–3 are shown). Verse 2 is comprised of a main clause, “count it all joy,” followed by a temporal subordinate clause, “when you encounter various trials.” Verse 3 continues with another subordinate clause which begins with a participle. After determining the general structure of the clauses and identifying the main clause, identify the subject and verb of that main clause.

In verse 2 the main verb is the second person plural, aorist middle imperative of *hēgeomai*. The *-omai* ending indicates this is a deponent verb, a verb with a passive form but an active meaning. As an aorist imperative the author is emphasizing the priority of the action. The subject is unstated in English, but understood, it is addressed to *you all*.

The first two words of the clause are in the beginning of the sentence for emphasis. Both words are feminine singular accusative. The first is the adjective *all*, the second the noun, *joy*. This is a double accusative and could be translated, “Count everything joy,” or by inserting a verb for better sense in English, “Count everything to be joy.”

The main verb of the temporal subordinate clause is the second person plural, aorist active subjunctive. The aorist tense is a constative aorist, simply summarizing the action as factual. The active voice means the reader is the one who acts in encountering the test, and the subjunctive mood indicates the possibility or potential of having a test. The dative is probably a rare use of the dative for direct object, not discussed in this manual.

Having analyzed verse 2, the student should begin verse 3. The first word is a participle without an article. This indicates an adverbial participle and an adverbial participle of cause best fits. The believer is able to fulfill the command to count testing to be joyful, because he knows something. The principle that is known is that which follows the *hoti* clause: “the testing of your faith produces endurance.”

This provides a brief summary of how the student can analyze the grammar and syntax of each verse. Every noun, verb, and verbal should be completely parsed, and each element of the parsing should be explained. Then the student should write an expanded translation which supplies a more accurate sense of the verse.

For a final exercise examine Philippians 2:5-8 and begin to answer the questions which follow.

Phil. 2:6-7

Philippians 2:5

5 τοῦτο φρονεῖτε ἐν ὑμῖν ὃ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ,  
 touto phroneite en hymin ho kai en Christō Iēsou,  
 οὗτος φρονέω ἐν ὑμεῖς ὃς καὶ ἐν Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς  
 houtos phroneō en hymeis hos kai en Christos Iēsous  
 this think in you which also in Christ Jesus  
 ODENSA V2PPAM PD OP2PD ORRNSN BX PD NMSD NMSD

6 ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ ἄρπαγμόν ἡγήσατο τὸ  
 hos en morphē theou hyparchōn ouch harpagmon hēgēsato to  
 ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεός ὑπάρχω οὐ ἄρπαγμός ἡγέομαι ὁ  
 hos en morphē theos hyparchō ou harpagmos hēgeomai ho  
 who in form of God existing not seizure considered the  
 ORRMSN PD NFSD NMSG VPAPMSN TN NMSA V3SAMI ANSA

εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ,  
 einai isa theō,  
 εἰμί ἴσος θεός  
 eimi isos theos  
 to be equal to God  
 VPAN BX NMSD

7 ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν μορφὴν δούλου λαβών, ἐν ὁμοιώματι  
 alla heauton ekenōsen morphēn doulou labōn, en homoiōmati  
 ἀλλά ἑαυτοῦ κενόω μορφὴ δούλος λαμβάνω ἐν ὁμοίωμα  
 alla heautou kenoō morphē doulos lambanō en homoiōma  
 but himself he emptied form of slave having taken in likeness  
 CCV OX3MSA V3SAAI NFSA NMSG VAAPMSN PD NNSD

ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος· καὶ σχήματι εὑρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος  
 anthrōpōn genomenos; kai schēmati heuretheis hōs anthrōpos  
 ἄνθρωπος γίνομαι καὶ σχῆμα εὑρίσκω ὡς ἄνθρωπος  
 anthrōpos ginomai kai schēma heuriskō hōs anthrōpos  
 of men becoming and in shape being found as man  
 NMPG VAMPMSN CCK NNSD VAPPMSN TP NMSN

1. Identify the first sentence.
2. The first sentence is composed of an independent clause, and a relative clause. Begin by analyzing the independent clause. What is the main verb, what is the subject of the clause?
3. Parse the main verb and explain each element.
4. Explain the significance of the nouns in the dative case.
5. Identify the main verb and the subject of vs. 6. Completely parse the verb and explain the significance of each element.
6. How many verbals are there in vs. 6? Identify the participle. Does it have an article or not? Identify and explain its usage.

7. Identify the infinitive in vs. 6. (Hint: the article suggests it is what kind of infinitive?). Wallace notes that this is a direct object infinitive in an object complement construction, "He did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped."
8. Verse 7 is a contrastive clause, part of the complex sentence making up verses 6 and 7. Identify the main verb the subject of verse 7.
9. Parse and explain the significance of each verb.
10. Parse and explain the significance of each verbal.