

# The Grammar of Salvation

1. The **voice of a verb** tells whether a thing is acting or being acted upon. The **active voice** indicates that a thing itself is acting; the **passive voice** indicates that a thing itself is being acted upon by another, it being passive in the action.

<b><u>Active</u></b>	<b><u>Passive</u></b>
He swallowed the fish.	He was swallowed by the fish.
We know God (Gal 4:9).	We are known of God (Gal 4:9).
Then shall I know (I Cor 13:10).	As also I am known (I Cor 13:10).
He accepted God.	He is accepted with God (Ep 1:6).

2. The **tense of a verb** tells the timing of the action. **Past**, **present**, and **future** tenses are obvious to most everyone.

<b><u>Past</u></b>	<b><u>Present</u></b>	<b><u>Future</u></b>
They ran to school.	They run to school.	They will run to school.
She loved the saints.	She loves the saints.	She will love the saints.
They were begotten.	They are being begotten.	They will be begotten.
Who was born.	Who is being born.	Who will be born.

3. The **perfect tense** means an action was completed, or perfected, some time before the given tense and is still true in the given tense. Perfect tense exists for past, present, and future.

<b><u>Past Perfect</u></b>	<b><u>Present Perfect</u></b>	<b><u>Future Perfect</u></b>
They had run to school.	They have run to school.	They will have run.
She had loved the saints.	She has loved the saints.	She will have loved.
They had been begotten.	They have been begotten.	They will have been begot.
Who had been born.	Who have been born.	Who will have been born.

4. **Verb order** has nothing to do with timing, if the verb tenses indicate otherwise.

The man that won the sit-up contest had run five miles. (He ran first).
They reported all that the chief priests <i>had</i> said unto them (Acts 4:23).
The elders at Jerusalem heard that Samaria <i>had</i> received the word of God (Acts 8:14).
He found a certain man, which <i>had</i> kept his bed eight years (Acts 9:33).
They cast them into the cave wherein they <i>had</i> been hid (Josh 10:27).

5. **I John 5:1** “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.”
  - a. The man that “believeth” [present tense] “is born” [perfect tense, passive voice] of God.
  - b. The grammar declares by verb tenses that the man was born of God before he believed.
  - c. Therefore, believing the gospel about Jesus Christ is evidence and proof of regeneration.
  - d. If you make it conditional, you must also require love and righteousness (I Jn 2:29; 4:7).
  - e. But love and righteousness are evidence of regeneration (I John 3:7,10,14; III John 1:11).
  - f. By comparing this verse to I John 4:7 and I John 3:14, you can clearly see it is evidence.
  - g. By reading more than the sound bite, we see other verbs proving evidence (I John 4:15).
  - h. And we can also verify that evidence is indicated here by reading I John 5:4 and 5:13.
  - i. Modern usage would write, anyone believing Jesus is the Christ *has been* born of God.
  - j. Those who make these statements to be conditional are ignorant or liars. Let God be true!
  - k. Check Greek verbs in A.T. Robertson, Berry’s [Interlinear](#), J.M. Pendleton, [here](#), or [here](#).
  
6. **I John 4:15** “Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.”
  - a. Remember the rule that order of verbs does not matter, for the tenses determine priority.
  - b. The act of faith, in confessing Jesus as Son, is clearly in the future tense, “shall confess.”
  - c. The result of regeneration, indwelling by God, is in the present tense, “God dwelleth.”
  - d. John taught that God already dwells in any person that confesses Jesus is the Son of God.
  - e. Confessing Jesus is the Son of God is evidence of union with God, not a condition for it.
  
7. **John 5:24** “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”
  - a. What tenses are “heareth,” “believeth,” “hath,” “shall not come,” and “is passed”?
  - b. The one hearing and believing (present tense) is already in possession of eternal life.
  - c. The one hearing and believing (present tense) shall not come into future condemnation.
  - d. The one hearing and believing (present) has already been passed by the perfect tense.
  - e. Modern usage would write, the man that believes *has been* passed from death unto life.
  - f. A believer has been passed from death to life, owns eternal life, and will not be damned.
  - g. This verse by itself is a wonderful lesson in salvation grammar by its variety of tenses.
  - h. Of course, the verse is read, quoted, and preached as a sound bite for decisional salvation.
  - i. Check Greek verbs in A.T. Robertson, Berry’s [Interlinear](#), J.M. Pendleton, [here](#), or [here](#).
  
8. **John 1:12-13** “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

- a. What are the verb tenses of “received,” “gave,” “believe,” and “were born”? Love them!
  - b. “Received him” is past tense as transition from John 1:11 in John’s historical account.
  - c. John brought past tense to the present by explanatory “even” and present tense “believe.”
  - d. Jesus “gave” [past tense] power to be God’s sons to those that “believe” [present tense].
  - e. Those who “believe” [present tense] “were born” [past tense] of God – the true order.
  - f. The action of birthing them by God had been perfected, or completed, before their belief.
  - g. Only this construction and understanding agrees with the descriptive facts of John 1:13.
  - h. Only this construction and understanding agrees with the rest of New Testament doctrine.
  - i. It is a travesty that men only quote and preach John 1:12, though it is but half a sentence.
  - j. For expositional details of John 1:12-13 ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/john-one.pdf>.
9. **1 Corinthians 1:18** “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”
- a. Only those who “are saved” (perfect tense, passive voice) perceive the gospel as glorious.
  - b. Those perishing do not profit by hearing the gospel; it is foolishness to them (II Cor 4:3).
  - c. The language is clear – a perfect tense “are saved” and a present tense “is” perceived – indicates that salvation occurred prior to the gospel being perceived as the power of God.
  - d. Paul used verb tenses here to show the gospel only benefits those already saved (called).
  - e. God must call a man in order for the gospel to make sense to that man (I Cor 1:22-24).
  - f. It is a travesty men use this verse as if the gospel were the conditional means of salvation.
  - g. For details of I Corinthians 1 ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/first-corinthians-1-1-18.pdf>.
10. **Ephesians 1:6** “To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”
- a. This text has to do with justification, not regeneration; but is it conditional at all?
  - b. Paul taught that our salvation is dependent on being accepted, not by accepting (Eph 1:6).
  - c. Crucial on Judgment Day is God’s acceptance of you, not yours of Him (Matt 7:21-23).
  - d. Here we are dealing with the voice of the verb – are we active or passive in acceptance?
  - e. It is the holy God accepting sinners by the merits of His beloved Son’s finished work.
  - f. The religious world is clamoring, buying, and seducing sinners to accept Jesus Christ.
  - g. God declared our adoption to result from being made acceptable to Him in Jesus Christ.
  - h. For more Ephesians 1 ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/exposition/ephesians1/sermon.php>.
11. **Acts 10:35** “But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”
- a. This text has to do with justification, not regeneration; but is it conditional at all?
  - b. He that feareth (singular, present tense) is accepted with Him (singular, perfect tense).
  - c. He that worketh righteousness (singular, present tense) is accepted (singular, perfect).
  - d. Thus, a man fearing God and working righteousness has already been accepted by God.
  - e. The context shows that Cornelius already had five traits of saved men (Acts 10:1-5).

- f. Being accepted with God through Jesus Christ is the stated key to salvation (Eph 1:6).
- g. If we preach conditions, we violate grace and Scripture (Rom 3:18; I Jn 2:29; 3:7,10).
- h. The only salvation Peter could give Cornelius was conversion (Ja 5:19-20; I Tim 4:16).
- i. Cornelius ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/salvation/when-was-cornelius-saved/sermon.php>.

12. **Acts 13:39** “And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses.”

- a. This text has to do with justification, not regeneration; but is it conditional at all?
- b. All that “believe” (plural, present tense) “are justified” (plural, perfect tense). Glory!
- c. Paul further confirmed the fact by ascribing justification “by him,” that is, by Christ!
- d. Paul argued that justification precedes faith in an evangelistic text about justification.

13. Salvation phases ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/salvation/five-phases-of-salvation/sermon.php>.