

# The Tense Readings of the Greek New Testament

by Daniel Steele

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*The sermon explores the critical role of Greek tenses in understanding New Testament theology and the implications for faith and salvation.*

**Scripture:** 1 Thessalonians 5:23, Hebrews 10:10, 2 Peter 1:4, 1 John 1:9, Revelation 7:14

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Sanctification"

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## Description

Daniel Steele preaches about the instantaneous and decisive work of sanctification and purification by the Holy Spirit, emphasizing the need for a momentary act of faith for believers to enter into a state of holiness. The use of aorist and perfect tenses in the Greek Testament verbs related to sanctification and perfection indicates a sharp transition from sin to holiness, rather than a gradual process. The aorists denote definite acts of sanctification and purification, highlighting the immediate and complete work of the Spirit in believers' hearts.

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## Transcript

IN this age of astonishing scientific progress, when the microscope applied to living tissues reveals whole continents of evidence of design in bioplastic life, and marvelously strengthens theism in its debate with atheism, we have applied the same instrument to the Greek Testament, in the aid of exegesis, in the interest of disputed truths, and for the refutation of certain doctrinal errors. Our microscope will be directed to a long-neglected field of research, the Greek tenses, not for the purpose of discovering new truths, but for the confirmation and clear elucidation of verities as old as revelation.

It is the evident order of Providence that there should be an advance in the evidences of Christianity in its various departments. Hence, Tischendorf, in rummaging the mouldy libraries of the Orient, lays open to the world a manuscript of the New Testament hidden for ages among the lazy, wine-bibbing Greek monks of a Sinaitic convent; and Smith digs up Nineveh from her long-lost grave, and makes her a swift witness against the doubters of Old Testament history; as Schliemann unearths old Troy to the confusion of those German destructives who, with pipe in mouth, over mugs of beer, were proving to their own satisfaction that Ilium was a myth, and the Iliad a splendid fiction born of the mythopoeic faculty of successive generations of rhapsodists wandering over Greece.

In the field of exegesis the late advance has been in the most searching grammatical analysis, attending to the accents, the particles, the tenses, and the emphatic order of the words. This results from the greater accuracy of modern scholarship. But most of our standard commentaries were written by annotators trained to disregard the minutiae of the Greek language. But Dean Alford, Bishop Ellicott, and other late sacred scholars, enrich their notes with gems of truth discovered by applying the microscope of modern learning.

They call frequent attention to the tenses as conveying important truth. Recent Greek Testament grammarians, such as Winer and the younger Buttmann, indignantly rebuke the blindness of the older annotators to the value of the tenses. Says Winer, the highest authority in the grammar of the Greek Testament, "In regard to the tenses of the verb, Greek Testament grammarians and expositors have exhibited very great misapprehensions. In general, the tenses are employed in the New Testament with exactly the same accuracy as in Greek authors."

He then quotes Berthold, as a representative of the slovenly style of treating the tenses, who says, "In the use of the tenses, it is well known that the New Testament writers paid little regard to the rules of grammar." But Winer denies this charge, and asserts that, "strictly and properly, none of these tenses (aorist, imperfect, perfect, and pluperfect) ever stands for another, as commentators pretend." That the English scholar may understand our argument and our illustrations, we will give the following definitions: The present tense denotes what is now going on, and indicates a continuous, repeated, or habitual action, as, I am writing. The imperfect denotes the same continuity or repetition in the past, as, I was writing.

"The aorist indicative," says Goodwin, "expresses the simple momentary occurrence of an action in past time, as, I wrote." The perfect denotes an action as already finished at the present time, as, I have written; my writing is just now finished. It also expresses the continuance of the result down to the present time; as the formula "It is written," is literally, it has been written, and implies that it now stands on record; the door has been shut, that is, it so remains till now. The pluperfect denotes an act which took place before another past act.

The chief peculiarity lies in the aorist. We have in the English no tense like it. Except in the indicative, it is timeless, and in all the moods indicates what Krueger styles "singleness of act." This idea our translators could not express without a circumlocution in words having no representatives in the Greek. "The poverty of our language," says Alford, "in the finer distinctions of the tenses, often obliges us to render inaccurately and fail short of the wonderful language with which we have to deal." His annotations abound in attempts to bring out the full significance of the tenses. For instance, in 2 Cor. xii. 7, "to buffet" (pres.) me, "is best thus expressed in the present. The aorist would denote but one such act of insult." This has been noted by both Chrysostom and Theophylact.

It is worthy of remark that when the aorist would indicate the momentary work of the Spirit in regeneration and in entire sanctification, these learned writers, especially Bishop Ellicott and Dean Alford, for dogmatic reasons, refrain from calling attention to the force of the aorist, except it be to note that baptismal regeneration is a single act.

As some of our readers may be disposed from dogmatic reasons or prejudice, to dispute our inferences from this tense, we proceed to fortify ourselves by the following authorities: -- Says Buttmann, in his recent New Testament Grammar: "The established distinction between the aorist, as a purely narrative tense (expressing something momentary), and the imperfect as a descriptive tense (expressing something

contemporaneous or continuous), holds in all its force in the New Testament. Says Winer: "Nowhere in the New Testament does the aorist express what is wont to be." "The aorist," says Meyer, "does not anywhere in the New Testament express a habit." In applying these principles we make several important discoveries. We cite only a few specimens :

1. All exhortations to prayer and to spiritual endeavour in the resistance of temptation are usually expressed in the present tense, which strongly indicates persistence.

Matt. vii. 7: Keep asking (pres.), and it shall be given you: seek (pres.) again and again, and ye shall find; knock persistently, and it shall be opened unto you.

Mark xi. 24: (Alford's version). Therefore I say unto you, All things that ye perseveringly pray (pres.) and ask for (pres.), keep believing (pres.) that ye receive (aor., Alford), and ye shall have them.

Luke xi. 10: For every one that asketh (pres.) perseveringly, receiveth; and he that seeketh (pres.) untiringly, findeth; and to him that persistently knocketh (pres.), it shall be opened. Verse 13: How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that importunately ask (pres.) Him. The idea implied is clearly expressed in Luke xviii. 1.

John xvi. 24: Ask (pres.) repeatedly, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be permanently filled (perfect).

Luke xiii. 24: Persistently agonize to enter in (aor.), once for all, at the strait gate.

Luke xviii. 13: But he kept smiting (imperfect), and saying, God be merciful (aor.) to me, the sinner. The conditions of pardon are persistently complied with.

James i. 5-6: If any one of you lack wisdom, let him frequently ask (pres.) of God, etc. But let him ask (pres.) repeatedly in faith, etc. Heb. xi. 6: For he that persistently comes (pres.) to God must believe (aor. definitely grasps two facts), (1) that He exists, and (2) that He is becoming a rewarder to those who diligently and repeatedly seek Him.

To this use of the present tense a remarkable exception occurs in Christ's last address before His crucifixion (John xiv.-xvi.). Here He for the first time directs us to pray in His name, and, as if to denote the influence of that all-prevailing name when presented to the Father in faith, the aorist tense is used when prayer is commanded, as if to teach that one presentation of the name of the adorable Son of God must be successful. See John xiv. 13, 14, and xvi. 23, 24. In the 23rd verse the aorist occurs, but in verse 24 the present tense (be asking) is used, probably in view of the foreseen fact that there would be multitudes of half-believers, who must be encouraged to pray till they fully believe in the name of Jesus Christ.

2. The next fact which impresses us in our investigation is the absence of the aorist and the presence of the present tense whenever the conditions of final salvation are stated. Our inference is that the conditions of ultimate salvation are continuous, extending through probation, and not completed in any one act. The great requirement is faith in Jesus Christ. A careful study of the Greek will convince the student that it is a great mistake to teach that a single act of faith furnishes a person with a paid-up, non-forfeitable policy, assuring the holder that he will inherit eternal life, or that a single energy of faith secures a through ticket for heaven, as is taught by the Plymouth Brethren, and by some popular lay evangelists. The Greek tenses show that faith is a state, a habit of mind, into which the believer enters at justification. The widespread mistake on this point is thus illustrated by Dr. John Hall, of New York: --

Have you ever seen a young girl learn to fire a pistol? I will not say, imagine a boy, for he would naturally be brave about it. I have seen young ladies acquiring this accomplishment, and it is a very curious thing. It may illustrate to you the false notion that many persons have about faith. The pistol is loaded and handed to the young lady. She takes hold of it very 'gingerly,' as if afraid it may shoot from the handle. Now, she means to go through with it: there is the mark: so she takes the pistol in her hand, and holds it out a long way, and appears to take aim with the greatest exactness, but does not shoot. She is a little afraid, trembles, and holds back. At last she screws up her courage to the sticking-point, and, as you suppose, taking the most exact aim, shuts her eyes firmly, and fires. The thing is done, and done with. Well, now, many intelligent persons are led to believe that faith is something like that -- something you end in an instant. You screw up your courage for it, then shut your eyes, and just believe once for all: then the thing is done, and you are saved. Now, that is a mistaken idea about faith itself. That real faith which is honest goes on from time to eternity.

Since we are writing for the English readers, we will refrain from quoting the Greek verbs, which would make our pages repulsive to the very class which we wish to benefit. Scholars will appreciate our argument if they accompany it with their Greek Testaments.

John i.12: But as many as received (aor.) Him (by a momentary and definite act), to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that are believing (present) perseveringly on His name. Here the aorist participle would have been used instead of the present, if a single act of faith secured ultimate salvation.

John iii. 15: That whosoever is continuously believing in Him should not perish (aor., once for all), but be having everlasting life. Here, again, the present and not the aorist participle of the verb to believe is used, as it is again in verses 16 and 36.

John v. 24: Verily, verily I say unto you, he that is always hearing My word, and constantly believing on Him that sent Me, hath eternal life, and is not coming into condemnation, but has passed over (perfect) from death unto life, and so continues. Says Alford: "So in I John v. 12, 13, the believing and the having eternal life are commensurate; where the faith is, the possession of eternal life is, and when the one remits, the other is forfeited. But here the faith is set before us as an enduring faith, and its effects described in their completion. (See Eph. i. 19, 20)." Thus this great English scholar rescues this text from its perverted use, to teach an eternal incorporation into Christ by a single act of faith, and he demonstrates the common-sense doctrine that the perseverance of the saints is grounded on persistent trust in Jesus Christ. A wise generalship does not destroy a captured fortress, but garrisons it.

John v. 44: How are ye able to put forth a momentary act of faith (aor.) who habitually receive (pres.) honour one of another, and are not constantly seeking the honour which is from God only? This interrogatory implies the impossibility of a single genuine act of faith springing up in a heart persistently courting human applause.

John v. 47: But if ye are not habitually believing His writings, how will ye believe My words?

John vi. 29: The received text reads thus: This is the work of God, that ye believe (aor., once for all) on Him whom He sent. When we first noticed this aorist tense, implying that the whole work required by God is summed up in an isolated act, we felt that there must be an error in this tense. By referring to Alford, Tregelles, and Tischendorf, we find that the aorist is rejected, and the present tense is restored, so that it reads: This is the work of God, that ye perseveringly believe, etc.

John vi. 35: He that is perpetually coming (pres.) to Me shall not, by any means (double negative), once hunger (aor.), and he that is constantly believing in ME (emphatic) shall never, by any means, (double negative), feel one pang of thirst (aor.). Says Bengel, "When thirst returns, the defect is in the man, not in the water." He has ceased to drink.

John vi. 54: Whoso eateth (pres., keeps eating) My flesh, and drinketh (keeps drinking) My blood, hath eternal life.

John xi. 25, 26: He that believeth persistently (pres.) shall not, by any means (double negative), die (aor.) forever.

John xx. 31: That ye might believe (aor.; but Tischendorf has the present, continue to believe) that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing constantly (pres.), ye might have life through His name.

Acts xvi. 30, 31: Sirs, what must I do to be instantaneously saved (aor.)? Believe instantaneously (aor.) on the Lord Jesus. This is no exception to the general use of the tenses. The jailer wished immediate deliverance from his guilt, and was directed to a definite and sharply defined act of reliance on Christ. But in Rom. i. 16, where future and eternal salvation is spoken of, it is promised to every one that perseveringly believes (pres.). So also in Rom. iii. 22; iv. 24; ix. 33; x. 4, 11; 1 Cor. i. 21; Eph. i. 19; I Thess. i. 7; ii. 10, 13; iv. 14.

In 2 Thess. i. 10, we find, not in the received text, but in the best manuscripts, an exceptional instance of the use of the aorist in expressing the conditions of final salvation: "to be admired in all them that believe" (aor.). Alford says it is used because the writer is "looking back from that day on the past," probation being viewed as a point.

A similar explanation he gives to the aorist in Heb. iv. 3, saying, that the standing-point is the day of entering into the rest. We prefer to teach that the aorist is preferred to the present in this passage because the general state of trust is not under discussion as the condition of entering eternal rest in heaven, but the grasping of the definite fact of Christ's ability to be the believer's Joshua, and to bring him into soul-rest in the present life. Hence the exhortation, verse 11, "Let us labour (Greek, hasten) to enter (aor.) into that rest." Other instances of the aorist, used when some distinct saying is to be believed, are found in John iv. 21; and in Matt. viii. 13.

Rev. xxii. 14: Blessed are they that are constantly doing His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. The best manuscripts read, Blessed are they that are always washing their garments, etc. In both instances the present tense is used. This is the last time the conditions of final salvation are expressed in the Bible.

There is in the New Testament one remarkable exception to the use of the present tense as expressing the continuousness of the conditions of salvation. We will not dodge Mark xvi. 16: He that believeth (aor.) once for all, and is baptized (aor.) once for all, shall be saved; he that disbelieves (aor.) shall be damned. It may not be known to the reader that the chief biblical critics, such as Westcott and Hort, agree in rejecting as spurious verses 9-20 of this chapter. Tischendorf drops them entirely from his edition. Dean Alford retains them in brackets, but thinks that both the external and the internal evidences are "very weighty against Mark's being the author. No less than twenty-one words and expressions occur in these verses, and some of them several times, which are never used by Mark, whose adherence to his own peculiar phrases is remarkable."

Should we admit the genuineness of this text, its meaning, says Meyer, is, "He who becomes a believer shall be saved," as in I Cor. iii. 5, "Ministers by whom ye became believers." This applies to Rom. xiii. 11. "First became believers."

Hence we conclude from a thorough examination of the above texts, that the Spirit of inspiration has uniformly chosen the present tense in order to teach that final salvation depends on persevering faith.

3. But when we come to consider the work of purification in the believer's soul, by the power of the Holy Spirit, both in the new birth and in entire sanctification, we find that the aorist is almost uniformly used. This tense, according to the best New Testament grammarians, never indicates a continuous, habitual, or repeated act, but one which is momentary, and done once for all. We adduce a few illustrative passages:

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Matt. viii. 2, 3: And behold, there came a leper, and he kept worshipping (imperfect) Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt Thou canst cleanse (aor.) me once for all. And Jesus, stretching out (aor.) His hand, touched (aor.) him, saying, I will, be thou instantaneously cleansed (aor.). The leper prayed to be cleansed, not gradually, but instantly, and it was done at a stroke, according to his faith.

Matt. xiv. 36, illustrates the difference between the imperfect and the aorist: And they kept beseeching (imp.) that they might touch just once (aor.) only the hem of His garment; and as many as only once touched (aor.) were instantaneously healed (aor.).

Matt. xxiii. 25, 26: Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: for ye are constantly cleansing (pres.) the outside of the cup and the platter, but within are full of extortion and injustice. Thou blind Pharisee, first cleanse (aor.) at a stroke the inside of the cup and of the platter, that the outside may instantly become (aor.) clean also. If Christ had commanded a gradual inward cleansing He would have used the present tense, "be cleansing by degrees."

Luke xvii. 14: And it came to pass that while they were going (pres.) they were instantaneously healed (aor.).

John xiii. 8: "If I wash (aor.) thee not, thou hast no part with Me." This washing is not the new birth, for Peter was already regenerate. Of His apostles Christ said, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "I am the vine, ye are the branches" (John xvii. 13; xv. 5). It must therefore symbolize entire sanctification. This cleansing after regeneration is taught in John xiii. 10 (R.V.), "He that is bathed needeth not save to wash (aor.) his feet, but is ever whit clean." Peter was partially but not entirely sanctified. "These words of Jesus," says Alford, "awakened a feeling of his own want of cleansing." Thus teach Stier, Bengel, and others. Tholuck says, "Only the extremities were yet to be purified. It was only needful that the internal principle should unfold itself further and penetrate the whole man." But the aorist tense indicates not a gradual process but a momentary and decisive act of cleansing.

John xvii. 17-19: Sanctify (aor., imperative) them once for all through Thy truth, that is, through faith in the distinctive office and work of the Comforter . . . And for their sakes I am consecrating (pres.) myself, in order that they in reality may have been permanently sanctified. Christ's was not a real sanctification or cleansing, inasmuch as He was never polluted; but the disciples needed sanctification in reality, or "truly." This is the suggested meaning of the words, "through the truth." See Bagster's marginal reading. Compare 2 Cor. vii. 14. Says Winer: "In the New Testament the obvious distinction between the imperative aorist -- as sanctify, above -- and the imperative present is uniformly maintained. The imperative aorist denotes an

action that is either rapidly completed and transient, or viewed as occurring but once. The imperative present denotes an action already commenced and to be continued, or an action going on, or to be frequently repeated." Both the aorist and the present are sometimes used in the same sentence, as in John ii. 16: Take (aor.) these things hence instantly, and be not making (pres.) My Father's house a house of merchandise. I Cor. xv. 34: Awake (aor.), and be not sinning (pres.) or stop sinning. Acts xv. 11: But we habitually believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we were saved (aor., by a momentary and completed act) even as they, (saved from guilt, not saved eternally). Rom. vi. 13: Here occurs a beautiful instance of this distinction, affording an undoubted proof-text for instantaneous sanctification, which is not seen in the English version: Nor render repeatedly (present imperative) your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin; but render (aor., by a final act of unreserved surrender, once for all) yourselves (not your members by a repeated and piecemeal consecration) to God (or for God's cause, says Tholuck), as alive from the dead. Says Alford: "The present imperative above denotes habit; the exhortation guards against the recurrence of a devotion of the members to sin; this aorist imperative, on the other hand, as in chap. xii. 1, denotes an act of self-devotion to God, once for all, not a mere recurrence of the habit." Tholuck's annotation brings out the completeness of this text as a proof of cleansing from original sin, "adikia, ungodliness in general; hamartia, the indwelling, predominant love of sin."

Acts xv. 9: Instantaneously purifying (aor.) their hearts by faith. This verse is a key to the instantaneous sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit wrought in the hearts of believers on the day of Pentecost, since the words even as he did unto us refer to that occasion. See Acts x. 45-47.

Rom. vi. 6: Knowing this, that our old man was crucified (aor.) once for all, that the body (being or totality) of sin might be destroyed (aor., at a stroke), that henceforth we should no longer be serving (pres.) sin. For he who once for all (aor.) died (unto sin) has been justified from sin. The aorist here teaches the possibility of an instantaneous death-stroke to inbred sin, and that there is no need of a slow and painful process, lingering till physical death or purgatorial fires end the torment. Men are not crucified limb by limb, after one part is dead finding a hand or arm or finger alive, but the whole life is extinguished all at once. A class of interpreters, who are afraid of entire sanctification in this life, and are especially horrified at an instantaneous purification by the stroke of Omnipotence, tone down the word "destroy" to "render inoperative or powerless." The strength of this verb will be seen by studying the following texts, where it is rendered by "abolish," "consume", or "destroy." 2 Cor. iii. 13: "And not as Moses which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished." Eph. ii. 15: "Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace." 2 Tim. i. 10: ". . . Our Saviour Jesus Christ Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." I Cor. xv. 26: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." 2 Thess. ii. 8: "And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming." Heb.ii. 14: "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same: that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil."

Rom. xii.1: That ye present (aor.) your bodies (as a single act, never needing to be repeated). The body is specified, because, says Tholuck, it is the organ of practical activity, or, as Olshausen, De Wette, and Alford say, "as an indication that the sanctification of Christian life is to extend to that part of man's nature which is most completely under bondage to sin." If in Paul's conception believers were to be sinning and repenting all their days, as the best that grace could do for them, he would have used the present

imperative, "Be presenting your bodies again and again." In Alford's note on I Peter ii. 5: Ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer (aor.) up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable unto God by Jesus Christ; he says: "The aorist is here used, because no habitual offering, as in rite or festival, is meant, but the one, once for all, devotion of the body, as in Rom. xii.1, to God as His." Both of these are proof-texts of a sharply-defined transition in Christian experience, called entire consecration, the human part of entire sanctification. That neither of these texts refers to justification is shown (1) by the fact that the persons addressed are already Christians; (2) by the requirement that the sacrifice be holy (Rom. xii. 1), that is, accepted, as the lamb was examined by the priest, and pronounced fit for sacrifice, or acceptable to Jehovah; and I Pet. ii, 5, requires a holy or accepted priesthood, both of which requirements symbolize a state of justification before God.

Rom. xiii. 14: Put ye on (aor., a single definite act) the Lord Jesus Christ, and make (pres.) not, that is, quit making, provision for the flesh, etc.

I Cor. v, 7: Purge out (aor.) the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump. This summary and instantaneous excision of the incestuous offender illustrates the force of the aorist in verbs signifying to purify.

I Cor. vi. 11: But ye washed yourselves (aor., middle) by submitting to outward baptism; ye were sanctified (aor.), ye were justified (aor.). Here the sanctification is a momentary and completed act, the same as the justification. By the figure called the inverted chiasmus the words "were justified" are placed last. The natural English order would be, "were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and were sanctified by the Spirit of our God." See Meyer.

2 Cor. i. 21, 22: Now, He who is continually establishing us with you, in Christ, and who once for all anointed (aor.) us, is God, who also sealed us (aor.) and gave (aor.) the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. Here the stablishing is constant, the anointing, sealing, and endowment are momentary and completed acts.

2 Cor. v. 21: The received text reads, "that we might be made (pres., being made) the righteousness," etc. Meyer, quoting Stallbaum's note on Crito, insists that this present tense signifies that that which was proposed has not yet been accomplished and passed by, but endures to the present. But Alford finds that all the best manuscripts have the aorist tense, indicating one accomplished act. This may refer to the redemption of the whole race, or the transition of individuals into a state of holiness. Paul's use of the we favours the latter view.

2 Cor. vi. 13: Be ye also enlarged (aor.) by the sudden baptism of the Holy Spirit.

2 Cor. vii.1: Let us cleanse (aor.) ourselves at a stroke from every filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting (pres.) holiness in the fear of the Lord. If Paul had been exhorting to a gradual inward cleansing he would certainly have used the present tense. The chapter division is here very unfortunate, and very much obscures the writer's thought. Bengel puts this verse in the paragraph which closes the sixth chapter. The course of the argument is this: The promise of the Old Testament was that ye should be sons and daughters of God. Having realized the fulfilment of this promise by adoption, let us who are sons cleanse ourselves, etc. Cleansing is here viewed as a human work, inasmuch as our application of the purifying power is by faith, as we are to make unto ourselves new hearts by availing ourselves of the regenerating Spirit. Paul uses the adhortative form, "let us cleanse," instead of the exhortatory form, "cleanse ye," simply to soften the command by including himself. This beauty of Greek rhetoric could not be quoted to prove that the writer was polluted in the flesh and in the spirit. that is, was indulging in

sensual and in spiritual sins. See James iii. 5, 6, and I Pet. iv. 3. The doctrine of this passage is that the faith that appropriates the Sanctifier is a momentary act, lifting the soul out of all outward or carnal, and inward or spiritual, sin. Had the process of sanctification been like washing a mud statue, a continuous and never completed work, as some teach, Paul would not have failed to express this idea by using the present tense: Let us be continually cleansing, etc. While the doctrine of instantaneous sanctification is taught by the aorist tense in this verse, the seemingly paradoxical doctrine of progressive sanctification is also taught by the present participle, "perfecting" holiness, etc. This word in this passage is defined in Bagster's Greek Testament Lexicon thus, "to carry into practice, to realize." The perfect inward cleansing instantaneously wrought by the Holy Spirit through faith is to be constantly and progressively carried outward into all the acts of daily life, as the moral discrimination becomes more and more acute with the increase of knowledge.

Gal. i. 15, 16: But when it pleased God, who separated (aor.) me from my mother's womb, and called (aor.) me by His grace, to reveal (aor.) His Son in me, etc. The words rendered separated and called are aorist participles. Says Goodwin: "The aorist participle regularly refers to a momentary or single action, which is past with reference to the time of the leading verb." In this passage the leading verb is "pleased." After his birth and calling, or conversion, there was an instantaneous revelation of the Son of God within, to the spiritual eye, as there had been an objective revelation of the form of the Son of man to Paul's physical eye on his way to Damascus. Both Ellicott and Alford insist that the sequence of tenses here teaches that this inward revelation of Christ was after his conversion. This may well be styled Paul's second blessing. This is in harmony with Christ's promise that He would manifest Himself to those who already love Him and evince their love by their obedience; John xiv. 21: "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him." John xvi. 14: "He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you."

Various metaphors and phrases are employed to denote entire sanctification, as will be seen in the following texts:--

Gal. ii. 19, 20: For I through the law died (aor. quite suddenly) to the law, that I might live unto God. I have been crucified (perfect) with Christ (and stay dead till now), and it is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me. Says Alford: "The punctuation in the English version is altogether wrong." Here is a perfect answer, in Paul's testimony, to the advocates of a lingering death of the old man, continuing up to the separation of soul and body. There was a time when Paul died to sin by a crucifixion -- a short and sharp kind of death-- and the old man lived no more. Some people are forever on the cross, always dying but never dead, because they do not grasp the sin-slaying power.

Gal. v. 24: And they that are Christ's have crucified (aor.) the flesh, together with the passions and lusts. From this it would appear that all believers are entirely sanctified as soon as they are regenerated. But Olshausen's explanation is very satisfactory: "It is remarkable here that the act of crucifying is designated past, while it is, certainly, involved in the exhortations of Paul that it is to be continued. This is explained by the fact that Paul here presents the idea of a true Christian quite objectively, and, therefore, in its completeness; as such the believer has entirely crucified the flesh." The only remaining question relates to the time when this completeness may be realized. Wesley says: "NOW, by faith, without doing or suffering more." Olshausen says: "In the concrete actuality, the complete idea, and, therefore, too, the crucifying of the old man, never appear completely realized." That is to say, the old man is completely crucified in the abstract, but in the concrete man he always lives! Common sense sides with the Englishman against the

German.

Gal. iv. 19: My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed (aor.) in you. Here is a second spiritual birth, distinct from the first. All devout pastors find multitudes in their churches, rocking as old babes in the cradle of spiritual infancy, and they travail in birth for them, that the faint image of Christ enstamped upon them in their regeneration may be renewed and permanently deepened. Like coins on which the head of Liberty is but slightly impressed, they need to be placed beneath the die again, and receive a deep and clear impress. The aorist expresses the instantaneous reminting.

Eph. i.13: After that ye believed (aor.) ye were sealed (aor.) with that Holy Spirit of promise. Here the believing and the sealing are acts distinct, definite, and completed.

Eph. ii. 5: By grace ye have been saved (perfect -- and so continue).

Eph. iii. 16-19: Here we have seven aorists in four verses -- grant, be strengthened, dwell, or, rather, "take up his abode" (Meyer), may be able to comprehend, to know, and be filled. May we not infer that Paul chose this tense to convey most strongly and vividly the ability of Christ to do a great work in a short time, to save believers fully, and to endow them with the fullness of the Spirit? If gradual impartations of the Sanctifier had been in his thought, it is strange that he did not use one present tense to express endowment by degrees. "The Greek perfect participles rooted and grounded," says Dr. Karl Braune, "denote a state in which they already are and continue to be, which is the presupposition in order that they may be able to know." The same writer, in Lange's Commentary, in his note on "to comprehend" (aor.), says that "it here means more than a mere intellectual apprehension, a perception, but preeminently an inward experience corresponding with 'to know' (aor.) in verse 19." "The aorist tense of 'to comprehend,'" says Ellicott, "perhaps implies the singleness of the act, and the middle voice -- called by Krueger a dynamic middle -- indicates the earnestness, or spiritual energy, with which the action is performed." How strongly does this grammatical examination of this passage confirm the essay of John Fletcher on the spiritual manifestation of Christ to the inward perception of the perfect believer by an instantaneous revelation!

Eph. iv. 13: Till we all attain (aor.) unto the unity of the faith and of the perfect knowledge of the Son of God, unto the full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, -- Alford's Version. The perfecting of the saints is here expressed by a definite and momentary arrival at a point where faith merges into knowledge, where a Saviour believed becomes a Saviour fully realized. See Olshausen's full comment. This transition from faith to full knowledge is a crisis expressed by the aorist. It is when the Paraclete purges the film of inbred sin from the eye of the soul, and Jesus, as a living, loving, glorified, and complete Saviour, is manifested to the spiritual vision. Then the child, the imperfect believer, becomes a perfect man, and reaches the fullness of Christ; that is, the abundance which he has to bestow, a fullness excluding all sin, but capable of eternal increase. That this point is before death is shown by the consequences which follow in the present life, as detailed in verses 14-16: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

Eph. iv.22: That ye put off (aor.) the old man (the unsanctified nature). Here the aorist is used, because the act of putting off is one and decisive, "referring," says Alford, "to a direct, definite and reflexive act."

Verse 23: And that ye be renewed (pres.) in the spirit of your mind.

Verse 24: And that ye put on (aor.) that new man, which after God is created (aor., was instantaneously created) in righteousness, etc. "Beware," says Alford, "of rendering, with Eadie and Peile, 'that ye have put off,' which is inconsistent with the context (ver. 25) and not justified by the word 'you' being expressed." This epistle is addressed to the saints and the faithful in Christ Jesus (chap. i. 1). Such undoubted Christians are exhorted by one decisive act to lay off the old man, implying that he was not yet fully laid aside, and to put on the new man, as if Christ were not fully investing and pervading the nature. Why these aorists, if only a gradual growth out of sin into holiness is contemplated?

Eph.v.25, 26: Husbands, be constantly loving (pres.) your wives, even as Christ loved (aor.) the Church. Says Ellicott: "The pure aoristic sense is more appropriate and more in accordance with the historic aorist that follows, so that 'gave' (aor.) is a specification of that wherein this love was pre-eminently shown. The moment is seized upon when His love culminated in the gift of His life for us." That He might sanctify (aor.) it, having cleansed (aor.) it by the washing of water with the word (R. V.). The exegetes all agree that the cleansing by water (symbolizing regeneration) precedes the definite and momentary act of sanctification. Thus Alford and Ellicott. Says Olshausen: "That He may sanctify her, after He had previously purified her by the bath, i.e., baptism and the new birth effected by it." Both regeneration and sanctification are distinct works instantaneously wrought with an interval of time between them. This is the legitimate inference from this passage.

Phil. iii. 12: Not already perfected (perfect), brought to the end of his course and crowned. The same word is used in the same sense in Luke xiii. 32: ". . . Behold, I cast out devils, and do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." Paul and Jesus disclaim the same perfection. Heb. ii. 10: "For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Heb. v. 9: "And being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." Heb. xii. 22, 23: ". . . Ye are come unto Mount Sion, . . . to the spirits of just men made perfect."

Col. i. 9: That ye might be filled (aor.) with the full knowledge of His will.

Col. iii. 5: Mortify (aor., kill outright), therefore, your members which are upon the earth; fornication, etc. "Let nothing," says Bishop Ellicott, "live inimical to your true life, hidden in Christ. Kill at once (aor.) the organs and media of a merely earthly life." Here, in the very strongest terms, is the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification as a distinct and instantaneous work of the Spirit clearly set forth. A young evangelist, holding meetings in a Baptist church, preached to pastor and people entire sanctification as immediately obtainable by faith. The pastor was stumbled by the English reading of this text, "Mortify;" that is, keep mortifying day by day. He thought that he must ever keep a little sin alive in his heart in order to be forever mortifying it. His mistake was (1) in overlooking the real meaning of Mortify, to make dead, and substituting the idea of repression: and (2) in disregarding the aorist tense of the command, enjoining a decisive and momentary act, to be done once for all.

Col. iii. 8: But now put off (aor.) all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. The aorist imperative is a broom that sweeps the heart clean at one stroke of omnipotent power.

Verse 12: Put on (aor.), therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering. By the incoming of the abiding Comforter all the excellencies of the Christian character are to be at once assumed. This is the positive side of entire sanctification, the negative being the mortifying of sin in verse 5.

Verse 13: Forbearing (pres.) one another, and forgiving (pres.) one another. There will be occasion for the constant exercise of these virtues.

Verse 15: Let the peace of God rule (pres.) constantly, and be (pres.) ye thankful always.

Verse 16; Let the word of Christ dwell (pres., perpetually) in you richly in all wisdom.

Verse 18: Wives submit (pres.) yourselves constantly, etc.

Verse 19: Husbands love (pres.) your wives at all times -- on washing days, when breakfast is late, and the bread is sour.

Verse 20: Children obey (pres.) your parents constantly.

Verse 21: Fathers provoke (pres.) not at anytime your children to anger lest they be discouraged.

Thus a series of present imperatives extends through this chapter and to verse 6 in chapter iv., enjoining daily recurring duties. But the aorist imperatives are always used when the duty of putting away sin from the heart, and putting on the fruits of the Spirit, is commanded. Let the candid reader examine this chapter, and he will see that the reason for the use of the aorists is that entire sanctification and the fullness of the Spirit are viewed as a work to be finished at a stroke, while duties to our fellow-men are to be constantly repeated. No other account can be given for the alternation of tenses in the imperatives in this chapter.

I Thess. iii. 13: To the end He may stablish (aor.) your hearts unblamable in holiness. Here the tense indicates a single and momentary act. The same Greek construction occurs in chapter iv. 9: "But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." Here the present tense is used, "to love one another," a constant duty. A similar form of expression in the Greek occurs in Heb. ix. 14: "How much more shall the blood . . . purge your conscience from dead works to serve (pres.) the living God."

I Thess. iv. 8: Who also gave (aor.) unto us His Holy Spirit. Here the aorist is used, says Alford, "as being a great definite act of God by His Son." The act is just as definite whether the gift is dispensational or individual.

I Thess. v. 23: And the very God of peace, once for all, sanctify (aor.) you wholly, and your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved (initial aorist, to mark the beginning in the heart of the power that keeps the believer). The nicety of Paul's grammatical knowledge is seen in verse 25: Brethren, pray (pres.) for us. Greet (aor.) all the brethren with a holy kiss. The praying was to be continuous, the kissing momentary.

2 Tim. ii. 21: If a man therefore purge (aor.) himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work. Sanctified and prepared are both in the perfect tense, implying the permanent result of the definite act of purging.

Titus ii. 14: Who gave (aor.) Himself for us, that He might redeem (aor.) us from all iniquity, and purify (aor.) unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good. The verbs gave, redeem, and purify are all aorists, indicating momentary acts. The purifying is before death, because its subjects are to be zealous of good works.

Titus iii. 4, 6: But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared. Which He shed (aor.) on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. (1) To inaugurate a dispensation; (2) To sanctify and endow individuals. Personal pentecosts have been experienced all along the ages. Paul received such a pentecost; Rom. v. 5: "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

Heb. iv. 11: Let us labour (hasten aor.), therefore, to enter into that rest. A vigorous and earnest effort is enjoined. The word labour in Greek is radically the same as haste in Josh. iv. 10: And the people hastened (aor.) and passed over.

Heb. x. 2: Because that the worshippers once purged (perfect), a cleansing once for all and permanent. Such have no more conscience, or consciousness, of sins.

Heb. x. 26: For if we willfully sin (pres., enter upon a course of sin) after we receive (aor.) the full knowledge (epignosis) of the truth, etc.

Heb. xii. 1,2: Let us also. . . lay aside (aor.), once and forever,. . . the sin which doth so easily beset, or "doth closely cling to us" (R.V. marg.), "Our inner propensity to sin" (Erasmus, Luther, Calvin, Ernesti and others), "sin as an indwelling evil" (Delitzsch), looking (present) away unto. . . Jesus -- the victorious attitude of the believer -- let us be running (present), etc.

Heb. xiii. 12: Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify (aor.) the people with His own blood, suffered (aor.) without the gate.

Heb. xiii. 29,31: Now the God of peace,. . . make you perfect (aor., an insulated act) in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ. The workman and not the work is to be made perfect.

James i. 21: Wherefore putting away (aorist, "because," says Alford, "it must be done as a single act, antecedently to that which follows") all filthiness and superfluity, (remnant of evil disposition inherent in our hearts, "surviving from old times," Michaelis), naughtiness, (the "infection of nature that doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated," Art. ix., Church of England), receive (aorist) the implanted word (which initial justifying faith has already appropriated), that is able to save (aorist) your souls, "because the power is to complete the work and to have done it forever." Alford. The same sacred scholar says, "It is evident from the contents of the epistle (of James) that it was written for Christian readers." These are exhorted to entire sanctification, immediately, by an act of all-surrendering faith in the blood of sprinkling, "without waiting to do or to suffer anything more." Wesley.

James iv. 8: Cleanse (aor.) your hands, ye sinners: and purify (aor.) your hearts, ye double-minded. "The double-minded man is at fault in heart; the sinner, in his hands likewise," Bengel. The former is a Christian, but carnal rather than spiritual (I Cor. iii. 1), and needs entire purification; and the latter is a natural man who is exhorted to seek regeneration. Alford says that "the double-minded are those whose affections are divided between God and the world." The text teaches that purity is an instantaneous cure.

I Pet. i. 15: So become ye yourselves (aor., by an all-surrendering act of faith) holy in all manner of conduct.

Verse 16 (according to the received text): Become ye (aor.) instantaneously holy, for I am holy. The aorist in these verses indicates a transition from sin to holiness, and not a progress. The word yourselves (R. V.) is proof positive that the holiness is inwrought and personal. "In all manner of living" (R. V.) is a phrase which shows that the place of this holiness is in our daily life here on earth, and not in the glorified person of Jesus Christ in heaven. "As He is so are we in this world."

I Pet. iii. 15: Sanctify (aor.) the Lord Christ in your hearts. Says Wiesinger, indorsed by Alford: "The addition of 'in your hearts' is added to the Old Testament quotation, to bring out that the sanctification must be perfected in the inner parts of a man, and so keep him from false fear." "Care only for this, that your heart may be a temple of Christ; then nothing will disturb you." This implies that there is a time when He becomes completely enthroned in the heart. Hence the precision of the aorist: Sanctify once for all a place for the Lord Christ, or Christ as Lord, in your hearts. See the critical reading of Christ for God. Verses 15 and 16 show the result in this life.

I Pet. v. 7: We copy Alford's note: "CASTING (aor., once for all, by an act which includes the life) ALL YOUR anxiety ('the whole of,' not every anxiety as it arises, for none will arise if this transference has been effectually made) UPON HIM." The parentheses are Alford's.

2 Pet, i. 4: That ye might become (aor.) partakers of the divine nature (R. V.). Says Alford: "The account of this aorist has not been anywhere, that I have seen, sufficiently given. It is untranslatable, in most cases, but seems to serve in the Greek to express that the aim was not the procedure, but the completion, of that indicated; not the carrying on of the process, but its accomplishment." This is corroborated by the aorist participle, "having escaped," in the same verse.

2 Pet. i. 19: We have (pres.) a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do (pres.) well that ye take (pres.) heed, as unto a light that shineth (pres.) in a dark place, until the day dawn (aor.), and the day star arise (aor.) in your hearts. We have the highest authority for reading this without a parenthesis, which some put in, obscuring the sense. No passage of Scripture more strikingly describes the writer's Christian experience, first of painful doubt and then of cloudless assurance; first a spasmodic clinging of the intellect to the external evidences of miracle and prophecy, and then the sunrise -- Christ manifested, the day-star in his heart. There are in this verse four verbs in the present tense, have, do, take, shineth, representing the alternation of light and darkness in early Christian experience. The lamp feebly glimmers in a gloomy, or, literally, dirty place, giving just light enough to see impurities, but not fire enough to consume them. In this twilight state doubts harass the soul, and there is an intense wishing and watching for the day-dawn and the rising sun, To the patient waiter there is at last a tropical sunrise. The darkness flees, the filthy place is cleansed.

" 'Tis Love! 'tis Love! Thou diedst for me;

I hear Thy whisper in my heart;

The morning breaks, the shadows flee:

Pure, universal Love Thou art:

To me, to all, Thy bowels move, --

Thy nature and Thy name is Love."

But how is this shown in the Greek text? Note the two aorist verbs dawn and arise, "putting an end," says Alford, "to the state indicated by the present participles above." What this day-star is, Grotius, De Wette, and Huther best explain, who think that some state in the readers themselves is pointed at, which is to supervene upon a less perfect state. Says Huther: "The writer distinguishes between two degrees of Christian life: in the first, faith rests upon outward evidences; in the second, on inward revelations of the Spirit; in the first, each detail is believed separately as such; in the second, each is recognized as a necessary part of the whole. And hence, being in the former is naturally called a walking in a dismal, dirty place, in the light of a lamp or candle, while the being in the latter is a walking in the morning." Alford adds: "This latter I believe to be nearly the true account." Let us see what is taught here: (1) Two states of spiritual life, symbolized by lamplight and sunlight. (2) The aorist tense marks a sharply-defined emergence from the first to the second, by the glorious King of day arising in the heart. This we believe to be a correct exegesis of this highly figurative and beautiful text. It accords with the experience of all who have entered into the definite experience of perfect love.

2 Pet. ii. 20: After they escaped (aor.) the pollutions of the world through the full knowledge (epignosis) of the Lord, etc.

Verse 22: The sow that was washed (aor.).

I John i. 9: If we persistently confess (pres.) our sins. He is faithful and just to forgive (aor.) us our sins, and to cleanse (aor.) us from all unrighteousness. The cleansing is just as definite, distinct, and decisive as the forgiving. Alford cannot escape the force of these aorists. "Observe the two verbs are aorists, because the purpose of the faithfulness and justice of God is to do each as one great complex act -- to justify and to sanctify wholly and entirely." Düsterdieck says: "The death and blood of Christ are set forth in two aspects: (1) as a sin-offering for our justification, and (2) as the purifying medium for our sanctification." If the purifying is to be by degrees, the present tense would have been used instead of the aorist. He pleads for gradual sanctification, but there is no more grammatical basis for it than there is for a progressive justification.

I John ii. 1: These things I write unto you, that ye sin (aor.) not even once. And if any man sin (aor., once, not habitually) we have (pres.) constantly an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous.

I John ii. 27: But the anointing which ye have received (aor.) in an instant of time, of Him abideth in you. The anointing of the high priest was an act, not a process.

I John iii. 6: Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him. This text in the English favours the notion that the man who loves not his brother never knew God savingly. But the perfect of this verb "to know" has acquired a present meaning. (See Winer, page 290). Says Alford: "Have known, and many other perfects, lose altogether their reference to the past event, and point simply to the present abiding effect of it." Hence Alford's version: "Whosoever sinneth seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him." He may have both seen (spiritually perceived) and known Him, but he does not now.

I John iii. 9: Whosoever has been born (perf., brought into permanent sonship) of God is not habitually sinning, for His seed is abiding in him, and he is not able to be sinning because he has been born (perf.) of God. If the aorist tense had been used in this verse instead of the perfect, it would have been a strong

proof-text for the doctrine, "Once in grace, always in grace." But, says Alford: "The abiding force of this divine generation in a man excludes sin; where sin enters that force does not abide; the 'has been born' (perf.) is in danger of becoming the 'was born' (aor.); a lost life instead of a living life. And so all such passages as this, instead of testifying, as Calvin would have this one do, to the doctrine of the final perseverance of the regenerate, do, in fact, bear witness to the opposite, namely, that as the Church of England teaches, we need God's special grace every day to keep us in the state of salvation, from which every act and thought of sin puts us in peril of falling away."

Rev. vii. 14: They washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Both verbs are aorists denoting definite acts. Hengstenberg interprets the former of the forgiveness of sins, the latter of entire sanctification.

The critical reader may find aorists in the Greek Testament which must imply a state and not an insulated act. These group themselves into the following classes:

1. Where no present tense is in use in the Greek.
2. Where the signification of the verb itself implies continuance, as to live, to abide, to walk, to keep. etc. Here the aorist marks the entrance upon the state, called an "inceptive aorist." See Hadley's Greek Grammar, § 708.
3. Unconnected and sudden aorist imperatives are used both in the New Testament and in classical authors to express the strong emotion of the speaker. See 2 Tim. iv. 2; James iv. 7-10.
4. Rarely in the Greek Testament an habitual act is expressed by the aorist, when the period of its continuance is long past, and the course of action is viewed as a completed whole. See Alford on 2 Thess. i. 10, and I Pet. iii. 6.

The aorists of verbs denoting sanctification and perfection quoted in this essay, belong to no one of these exceptional classes.

We have looked in vain to find one of these verbs in the imperfect tense when individuals are spoken of, The verb *hagiazō*, to sanctify, is always aorist or perfect. Acts xx. 32: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified." Acts xxvi. 18: "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified through faith that is in Me." Rom. xv. 16: "That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." I Cor. i.1, 2: "Paul, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus." 2 Tim. ii. 21: "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use." Heb. x. 10: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Heb. x. 29: "of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace." Jude 1: "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ. . . to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called."

The verbs 'katharizo' and 'hagnizo', to purify, are also always aorist or perfect. Our inference is that the energy of the Holy Spirit in the work of entire sanctification, however long the preparation, is put forth at a stroke by a momentary act. This is corroborated by the universal testimony of those who have experienced this grace.

Says Prof. Joseph Agar Beet: "It is worthy of notice that in the New Testament we never read expressly and unmistakably of sanctification as a gradual process, or, except perhaps Rev. xxii. 11 ('He that is holy, let him be made holy still, margin, yet more, R. V. '), of degrees and growth in holiness. A gradual process is not necessarily implied in the present participles of Heb. ii. 11; x. 14."

The reason why gradualism is not necessarily implied is found in the use of the present tense to describe momentary acts repeated not on the same individual but on a succession of different persons. Thus justification by faith is expressed by the present tense in Rom. iii. 24, not because it is a gradual process in the pardon of the believer, but because believers in succession are "justified freely by His grace." When the individual leper was healed, in Matt. viii. 3, the aorist is twice used, but when many are to be cleansed one after another the present imperative is used, Matt. x, 8, "cleanse the lepers."

Canon Westcott admits that in the only two texts where the present tense of the verb sanctify is used, Heb. ii. 11: "For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one;" and Heb. x. 14: "For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified," the reference may be to "successive generations." His alternative theory that the "present tense shows the continuous process by which the divine gift is slowly realized from stage to stage in the individual life," seems to be highly improbable in view of the general use of the aorist of the verbs sanctify, cleanse, and destroy (sin).

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