



Why Isolated Greek Word Studies Fall

The Lord calls His people not merely to notice sacred words, but to understand their sense faithfully. When Ezra's helpers "read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense," the hearers received the meaning of the passage (Nehemiah 8:8). A word study may illuminate an important term, yet no dictionary entry can settle its meaning apart from the sentence in which it stands, the passage that bears it, and the book's larger purpose. Words can carry several senses, and their use must be discerned with patience rather than assumption. In Luke 10:25-28, the lawyer asks about inheriting eternal life; Christ directs him to what is written, and the answer is read in its scriptural setting. Such care guards against making a word say more—or less—than the inspired writer intended. Prayerful attention to grammar, context, and the whole counsel of Scripture helps readers handle the Word of truth reverently and serve its hearers well.

The Scriptures were given through holy men who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:20-21), yet they came through human authors writing in particular tongues and settings. For this reason, attention to Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek can help clarify a word's range, a grammatical form, or an expression shaped by its time. Such study, however, must serve the written Word, not stand above it. A word cannot be rightly understood by its possible meanings alone; its use in the sentence, the passage, and the book must govern, while the harmony of Scripture guards against strained conclusions. Paul charged Timothy to continue in the sacred writings, which are able to make wise unto salvation and furnish the man of God unto every good work (2 Timothy 3:14-17). The purpose, then, is not to display learning or discover novelties, but to hear the text faithfully, with humility, prayer, and care, trusting the Lord who gave His Word.