

## GREEK WORD STUDIES - TELEIOS

The first order of business will be to see how the different translators chose to translate our word. Secondly we will define our word by consulting some noted Greek scholars. Thirdly, we will examine how the word is used in different passages of scripture and categorize them according to the definition. Finally, we will apply our knowledge of the definition and usage of our word to help obtain a better understanding of a difficult passage of scripture.

### TRANSLATIONS

Let us consider how six translations of the NT have translated TELEIOS (an adjective) and TELIOO (a verb).

1. The American Standard Version- perfect, man, full-age, full-grown.
2. The King James Version- perfect
3. The New King James Version- perfect, mature
4. The New American Standard Version- complete
5. Phillips Modern English Version- complete
6. The New English Bible- wholeness, grown-up, whole-way

Various translations on TELIOO- consecrate, finish, fulfill, make perfect.

### DEFINITIONS

Now to see what four Greek lexicographers have to say.

1. Thayer- "... brought to its end, finished; wanting nothing; perfect., of men, full-grown, adult, mature..." The verb: "1. to carry through completely; to bring to an end. 2. i.e. add what is yet wanting in order to render a thing full. 3. to bring to the proposed goal..."
2. Vincent- (I Cor. 2:6): "... them that are full-grown.... see Eph. 4:13 where a perfect man is contrasted with children... also I Cor. 14:20: where the word men 'is lit. perfect..."
3. Barclay- "TELEIOS has a physical sense; it describes an animal or a person who is full-grown and who has reached the height of physical development. It also has a mental sense. It describes a person who has progressed beyond the rudimentary instruction and is now a mature student. This is the sense which Paul uses in I Cor. 2:6..."
4. Vine- "... It is used 1. of persons, (a) primarily of physical development, but also (b) of goodness without reference to maturity...a spiritual maturity or completeness, Mt. 19:21. 2. of things, complete or perfect, Rom. 12:2 and I Cor, 13:10..."

**NOTE:** Our word TELEIOS does not mean perfect in the sense of never being wrong or without flaw.

## CATERGORIZATION

Using the two major categories set forth in Vine's definition, we can categorize a representative group of scriptures.

### OF PERSONS

Mt. 5:48  
Mt. 19:21  
I Cor. 2:6  
Eph. 4:13  
Heb. 5:14

### OF THINGS

Rom. 12:2  
I Cor. 14:20  
Jas. 1:25  
I Cor. 13:10

The Adjective:  
TELEIOS

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Heb. 2:10  
Heb. 5:9  
Heb. 7:28  
Heb. 9:9  
Heb. 10:1

Jn. 4:34  
Jn. 19:28  
Heb. 7:19  
Jas. 2:22  
I Jn. 2:5

The Verb:  
TELIOO

## APPLICATION

Now we will turn our attention to I Cor. 13:10. Notice which heading we have placed this verse under in our chart.

In the thirteenth chapter of I Cor. Paul is showing that love (agape) is the supreme gift and the supreme grace. (Read the entire chapter)

Focus on verses 8-12. Love will outlive all things to which it can be compared, namely prophecy, tongues and knowledge. These supernatural gifts were needed in the infant church. Verse 10 indicates that something would make these gifts unnecessary, and they would become outgrown and discarded.

Note: Something was coming, not someone!

What then is the perfect or full-grown manifestation of these spiritual gifts?

- 1) The Written Word of God and
- 2) a well instructed church.

The mistake made by many is to read the "perfect" of verse 10 to be Christ. To do this allows them to practice their so-called spiritual gifts until the Second Coming. To yearn for these things however is a mark of immaturity, for they are childish things, put away by the fully revealed Gospel.

We therefore conclude that the "perfect" is some thing that supercedes gifts and precedes the Second Coming. Any other interpretation would lead us to believe that the Bible is not the complete revelation of God's will for man, and not worthy of the Christians full faith, hope and trust.

## CONCLUSION

It is not necessary to be a Greek scholar to understand the will of God, but as a Christian ever striving to become TELEIOS, (full-grown) we must take advantage of the study of others to help us achieve our goal.