

Aorist Imperative Jesus Christ Intentionally Used.

Luke 12:27-32

by Rev. Day Sun Lee

27 κατανοήσατε τὰ κρίνα πῶς αὐξάνει· οὐ κοπιᾷ οὐδὲ νήθει· λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν, οὐδὲ Σολομῶν ἐν πάσῃ τῇ δόξῃ αὐτοῦ περιεβάλετο ὡς ἓν τούτων.

Start quickly to consider how the wildflowers grow; they do not work or spin thread. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was clothed (=adorned) like one of these.

28 εἰ δὲ ἐν ἀγρῷ τὸν χόρτον ὄντα σήμερον καὶ αὔριον εἰς κλίβανον βαλλόμενον ὁ θεὸς οὕτως ἀμφιέζει, πόσω μᾶλλον ὑμᾶς, ὀλιγόπιστοι.

If the grass, which is in the field today and is thrown into the furnace tomorrow, God clothes thus, how much more for you -- ye of little faith?

29 καὶ ὑμεῖς μὴ ζητεῖτε τί φάγητε καὶ τί πίνητε καὶ μὴ μετεωρίζεσθε·

So ye, do not be overly concerned about what you will eat and what you will drink, and nor be worried;

30 ταῦτα γὰρ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τοῦ κόσμου ἐπιζητοῦσιν, ὑμῶν δὲ ὁ πατὴρ οἶδεν ὅτι χρῆζετε τούτων.

For the Gentile world eagerly seeks all these things, and your Father knows that you need them;

31 πλὴν ζητεῖτε τὴν βασιλείαν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ταῦτα προστεθήσεται ὑμῖν.

But, pursue his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

32 Μὴ φοβοῦ, τὸ μικρὸν ποίμνιον, ὅτι εὐδόκησεν ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν δοῦναι ὑμῖν τὴν βασιλείαν.

Don't be afraid, little flock, because your Father delights in giving you the kingdom.

Introduction.

This preaching is the message that I promised at the beginning of this Fall Semester to deliver in the class. The purpose is to let you know how important the Greek parsing (separating and analyzing) and syntax (the set of rules forming language) to the study of the New Testament.

Sometimes you've seen advertisements from travel companies that organize to take Christians to the original place where Christianity began. Many churches want to make travel to Israel to learn the very long ago Christian life. They travel around Israel while listening to religious speeches from the Bible. However, is it possible for travelers to access the very long ago mind and way of behaving of loyal students?

I think there is a better way to access the original facts and conditions that surrounded the Christianity. When we break a Greek word using the Greek syntax, we could very detailed look into the circumstances and attitudes of the loyal students. And we could stand nearby the loyal students as if we were remaining with them.

Therefore, let's imagine as if we were traveling with loyal students together. We stand now nearby loyal students while listening to Jesus Christ's teaching. Let's imagine that as if we stood at the wilderness where Jesus spoke κατανοήσατε (27) which is Aorist imperative 2nd person plural.

The Aorist imperative of κατανοήσατε is ingressive. This aorist imperative is a command to begin an action. It is common usage. The stress is on the URGENCY of the work. (p719, Greek Grammar beyond the Basic by Daniel B Wallace). Based on this definition of the Aorist imperative, there are two critical points here: the beginning point of the action and the urgency of the work. Therefore, these two crucial points are going to be applied directly to the word κατανοήσατε for examining the word κατανοήσατε more in details. Furthermore, while preparing sermons, we should equally apply to the speech these two vital points of the Aorist imperative, applicable not only to κατανοήσατε but also to any verbs of Aorist imperatives that appear in the New Testament.

To look into κατανοήσατε 'katanoeisate' more in detail, we confine our thinking within the boundary of two crucial points: the beginning of the action and the urgency of the work.

We don't quote any other scriptures to explain the word κατανοήσατε 'katanoeisate,' since quoting similar words from other scriptures would make two crucial points vague or blurry. But the scriptures with verbs of Aorist imperative could be cited. Furthermore, we employ neither a parable nor an entertaining story. By limiting our thinking to the verb of Aorist Imperative, we should be able to concentrate on examining κατανοήσατε 'katanoeisate.' And we could put ourselves to stand at its prolonged ago environment concerning its circumstances and attitudes of the loyal students.

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(Now try to explain the beginning of the action and the urgent change of our lifestyle one by one.)

Let's find the urgency of the action. Where is the emergency? Who is in a hurry? There are two teams: Jesus and the disciples' side.

One day, while walking on the field, Jesus Christ saw the wild-flowers, the lilies. Jesus Christ's inner soul has already contacted the Heavenly Father. His inner Spirit has begun saying My Father feeds them and takes care of them.

And then he saw his loyal students were about to pass by, walk away from the wild-flowers, lilies. They are about to miss the rare opportunity to find God in nature and to understand the loving care work of God. The scenery of the wild-flowers is a unique chance to see our God in the natural environment. Thus, the urgency of the action is on the side of Jesus Christ. He has to quickly say something before his disciples pass by the wild-flowers, the lilies.

We see here that the beginning of loyal students' motion and Jesus Christ urgent request don't seem to move quickly. I can cite, however, the scriptures where these two points of Aorist Imperative work simultaneously.

In Matt 8:25, on a day, Jesus and loyal students were sailing together. A violent storm arose, and their ship was quickly sinking. Jesus Christ was sleeping. They cried out, κύριε, σῶσον! Lord, Save, which is Aorist Imperative. Here the urgency is on disciples' side. And

Jesus Christ rebuked the nature, and the sea became calm. The better example could be Matt 14:30. Peter was walking on water following Jesus Christ. When he sank, Peter cried κύριε, σῶσον με. Lord, Save me. And verse 31 starts with εὐθέως 'Immediately' Jesus stretched out his hand and caught Peter. So from these examples, we learn that loyal students used Aorist Imperative in situations where a new action is quickly required. Now, let's go back to our discussion.

Jesus Christ could have used the present imperative here. A couple of verses below, He used the present imperative, "Look for, or Pursue," the kingdom of God. But here in verse 27, He avoided, and in a carefully planned way and on purpose used the Aorist imperative. Why is the Aorist Imperative so crucial in this situation?

Aorist Imperative is a command to begin an action that you have not started. If I apply the beginning point of motion, I translate κατανοήσατε as 'begin to look at, or start to look at.' To provide this critical phrase, Jesus Christ spoke Aorist Imperative κατανοήσατε to his loyal students. κατανοήσατε τὰ κρίνα πῶς αὐξάνει· 'Begin to look for how the wild-flowers grow.' Don't pass by. Lift your eyes and start to look at the wild-flowers so that you could understand that God feeds them and cares for them.

Not very long ago, have you seen the moon? Were you under the shadow of the tree and appreciated it? Nature is the basis where we have to start our trip to find our Heavenly Father. The friendlier is our soul to living, the easier is our soul to see the blessings upon me from our Heavenly Father.

Then, Jesus Christ has clearly stated that God clothes the grass, which is in the field today and is thrown into the furnace tomorrow, how much more for you! What's more, pursue God's kingdom and his righteousness. ζητεῖτε πρῶτον τὴν βασιλείαν [τοῦ θεοῦ] καὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην αὐτοῦ, (Matt. 6:33). I used Matt. 6:33 because Matt. has τὴν δικαιοσύνην αὐτοῦ his righteousness (moral rightness). All these things God provides to you because he delights to give you his kingdom.

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While approaching the wild-flowers, why their eyes did not see them? What makes their

eyes so dummy that they did not look at the wild-flowers? This dummy state is the point we must find out now.

Based on verse 29 and 32, the loyal students were μετεωρίζεσθε anxious, nervous, and worry. Their mind was wandering. They keep worrying. What's more, they were afraid of, φοβοῦ. They even feared. They might have thought about the day when Jesus Christ is not going to be with them. What is going to happen to us? The loyal students' worry for the future made Jesus spoke to them: Don't worry about tomorrow.

And Jesus Christ's inner soul has already touched the Heavenly Father. And he praised his caring for the wild-flowers. However, the loyal students who were walking with Jesus Christ together were anxious, nervous, and worry. Their mind was wandering. They keep worrying, What's more, they were afraid. They even feared the next day. Their insecure feelings act like a dome covering their spirit and inner soul. Because they overcame with anxious feelings, they did not look at the wild-flowers, nature, the natural chance to find God's work in the environment.

The worry about daily life belongs to everybody. To a lesser or greater degree, we worry about eating, drinking, and making earnings to meet the number. But we have to stop, quit from worrying and fearing at least on Sunday to worship God.

Studying in America costs a lot of money. You have to worry about your distant family members, friends, your business. You are not free from attending classes yet. Some of you have to drive two hours to come to Hayfield University. Me too, I urge one and a half hours to go to Hayfield University. These are usual to all of us, but sometimes they may become a heavy load to carry.

Conclusion

To start something, I must stop doing whatever it may be. Jesus Christ saw a deadline; the wild-flowers are bloomed beautifully but only for a while. In this situation, passing by in the field, the urgency is involved. There is a deadline. Time goes by, and no more wild-flowers bloomed could be seen.

I honestly suggest the necessary steps to becoming free from worry and fear, even though we may have different concerns and anxiety.

We gather together to worship God at Church. At least on Sunday, we quit from doing our work, worrying and fearing to worship our Heavenly Father. Stopping from work is the starting point to become a soul free person. Stopping working on Sunday is the first step to become a good and worshipping Christian.

Second, pursue God's kingdom and his moral rightness, instead of doing mundane things of daily life only. In the new community of people, Christians should demonstrate the benefits of God's kingdom in our social environment. Sing along gracious, spiritual, comforting songs, sharing teaching divine words each other in prayer.

Third, based on Jesus Christ's on purpose use of the Aorist imperative that stresses the beginning point of action and the urgency of the work involved, Christ teachings always are permanent and applicable around the world and individually as well.

From here, let's examine out current crucial matter, the environment issue in the light of these two essential points of Aorist Imperative. Recently, we all often listen that 'We must change surrounding conditions.' Our environment issue involves a deadline to begin our cooperative work globally. And at the same time, the environment issue should be urgently resolved. Time goes by, and no more chance to go back to the old-time living. I lived in a developing country, Korea, where American bombs, Japanese bombs, Soviet bombs, and Chinese bombs burnt everything built on the ground. That's why I moved to America to survive.

For about 50 years, however, the world has been changed a lot. I know how to live in an emerging country. Could we go back to the old-time? Could we live like Amish and Quaker? Could we limit the scientific research in the medicine and farming only? Our environment demands the whole world must together urgent change in living. Must begin NOW to go back to the old lifestyle. I can do it. Then You can do it. Then we all can do it before the deadline comes and before we run over the stop sign to crash the earth itself. When we go back to the grandfather's lifestyle, we may be better freeing ourselves from worry and fear and various material pollutions.

Fourth, let's examine our spiritual life in the light of two crucial points: the beginning of a new action that I have never taken and the urgency of our work. Could we delay to decide where my soul should go because I do mundane things in a hurry? As a Christian, life here is one thing. Beyond this, there is the unknown where we hope to live with Jesus Christ.

Have we strongly believed that God will supply all the things we need in this life? Have we, depending on God's supply, ever reduced global production? And shouldn't we cut down digging up natural resources and honestly repent our greediness inversely? Shouldn't we pursue the Kingdom of God with more energy and plans the gentile world eagerly sought for mundane things?

Therefore, I may merely and honestly state that let's begin a life trip to find our Heavenly Father while we are here. Let's start dreaming to improve our soul life, growing like a tree planted on the bank of the ever-flowing river. So that at Church and society, no one could feel neither worry nor fear at all.

We must start to depend on God's supply, nature. Our soul-life must be pure and secure enough with the quantity supply of God so that we should be able to make this small world beautiful again. I believe that when the Church positively involves making this world clean and elegant, the people of the town may lift the Church to the level of being equal to God's kingdom. As a result, God may dwell with us.

Furthermore I also believe that the Church, comforting each other, could bring many a soul to the cleansed world where the supply of God, nature itself blooms and supplies season after season. I believe so and pray for you. Amen! Hallelujah!