

Question About Databases That Lists All Imperatives in the New Testament

By Pastor Ed Anderson

Imperative sentences are a type of sentence that expresses a direct command, warning, instruction, or request. Imperative sentences do not always explicitly state a subject because the subject (“you”) is implied.

Does a database exist that lists every imperative verse in the New Testament?

Answer:

Yes — there *are* databases and resources that catalogue imperative (command-style) verbs and sentences in the New Testament. Here are some helpful details and caveats for you to consider.

What resources exist

- One list claims to have **1,098 imperatives** in the New Testament, with verbs listed by Greek form and English translation.
- Grammar studies of Biblical Greek discuss the imperative mood, how it’s formed, when it’s used, and how it functions in commands, instruction, prohibitions.
- Some software tools (Bible software) allow you to search by verb mood, which can help you isolate imperatives in the Greek text.

Important caveats to understand

- Just because a verb is in the *imperative mood* doesn’t automatically mean it’s a direct “command you must obey” in all cases. Some imperatives are rhetorical, inter-personal, hortatory (encouragement), or conditional.
- Translators often render Greek imperatives as English “let” or “may” forms (for example: “Let us go” instead of “Go”), so you’ll need to check the Greek when you want precision.
- Not all commands in the NT are formed with the imperative mood in Greek; English translations may say “must,” “should,” “be,” etc., while the Greek uses a subjunctive or another construction. So a purely “find all English imperatives” approach will miss many.
- “Imperative sentences” in English grammar (your posted definition) includes commands, warnings, instructions, requests. But in Greek/NT exegesis, the form and

nuance matter: imperative mood vs. other moods conveying command-sense. So you'll want both grammatical and semantic filters.

How you could use this

- Use Bible software (e.g., Logos, Accordance) to run a search: *verb mood = imperative* in the Greek of the NT.
- Sort the results by book, verse, verb root, context (what kind of command?).
- Create a spreadsheet or database listing: verse reference, Greek verb, translation, basic English command (imperative sense), context (warning? instruction? request?).
- Use it for theological study: e.g., commands about faith, commands about love, commands about conduct, commands about doctrine.

Here are some **excellent resources and databases** you can use (or share with Pastor Ed) to study imperatives and other grammatical features of the New Testament.

Key Resources & Databases

- The Greek Imperative Mood in the New Testament: A Cognitive and Communicative Approach
- Logos Bible Software — Allows you to highlight all Greek imperatives (verb mood = imperative).
- Verbum / Logos syntax search article — Shows how to search for grammatical structures in Greek NT.
- Koine-Greek.com — Blog with data on Greek imperative forms and other linguistic databases.
- All Imperatives in the New Testament (Matthew Barron's list) — A compiled list of over 1,000 imperatives in NT texts.
- BiblicalTraining Institute, NT201 & NT203 Greek Grammar (Bill Mounce's resources) — Lessons on the Greek imperative mood and other non-Indicative moods.

How You Might Use Them

- Use Logos or Verbum to **search Greek verb mood = imperative** and generate a list of verses.
- Use the Barron list as a **starter catalogue**, then cross-check for context and meaning.
- Use Bill Mounce's lessons (or the Koine-Greek blog) to deepen your understanding of how imperatives function in Greek (command, request, encouragement, etc.).
- Use the scholarly book to explore **nuance**: not all imperatives are straightforward commands; some are requests, exhortations, or conditional.

