November 1994

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ARE YOU ALREADY 'SAVED'?

Many people in other churches will boldly state: "I AM SAVED". That is obviously in opposition to what we were taught by Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong right up to the time of his death. So what does the Bible actually say about this subject? Are we already NOW saved, as so many people claim? Or is the matter of "being saved" something that will only be determined in the future?

To start with, God only inspired the original authors of the various books of the Bible, but not the translators of the various translations that are extant. THEREFORE it is not sufficient to use any one particular TRANSLATION of the Bible to establish the truth. What counts is the original wording that God actually inspired. Once that has been established, THEN we can ask: is there a particular translation that renders this original wording correctly? Translations that do not translate the words correctly should be ignored.

With the specific question we are examining here (i.e. "being saved") there is no difficulty in translating the words correctly. But with this question we are dealing with VERBS! And where differences of interpretation can enter the picture is when THE TENSES of the verbs are translated incorrectly.

SPECIFICALLY: what is of the utmost importance is a correct understanding of the tenses in which the verbs are used in the original GREEK! It is pointless building an argument on the tenses that appear in the ENGLISH text. Such an argument would ASSUME that the tenses found in the English translation are a correct reflection of the meaning in the original Greek. But we cannot afford to make such an assumption! We must try to establish the facts.

THE DIFFICULTY which then confronts us is this: In the Greek of the New Testament there are 6 different tenses for verbs. In addition to this, 4 of these 6 tenses have a SECOND form, which is purely a grammatical feature, but which has no effect on the actual meaning of the tense. These "second forms" came about as a natural development of the language as different ways of saying the same thing came into vogue, while the old forms also continued in popular use. (We have the same type of thing in the English language.)

In this article, when I refer to the "6 tenses" I mean to include the 4 "second form" tenses, which don't add any new dimension to the actual meaning of the verbs.

THE 6 GREEK TENSES ARE:

- PRESENT TENSE = as in English;

- FUTURE TENSE = also as in English;

- 3 PAST TENSES :

PERFECT TENSE = also as in English;

PLUPERFECT TENSE = also as in English;

IMPERFECT TENSE = implying continual action;

- AORIST TENSE = English has no equivalent for this tense.

THE 4 "SECOND" TENSES ARE:

- SECOND FUTURE = identical meaning to FUTURE TENSE;

- SECOND PERFECT = identical meaning to PERFECT TENSE;

- SECOND PLUPERFECT = identical meaning to PLUPERFECT TENSE;

- SECOND AORIST = identical meaning to AORIST TENSE.

<u>THE AORIST TENSE:</u>

The aorist tense is characterized by ITS EMPHASIS ON PUNCTILIAR ACTION; THAT IS, THE CONCEPT OF THE VERB IS CONSIDERED WITHOUT REGARD FOR PAST, PRESENT, OR FUTURE TIME. There is no direct or clear English equivalent for this tense, though IT IS GENERALLY RENDERED AS A SIMPLE PAST TENSE IN MOST TRANSLATIONS.

Some scholars will disagree with this assessment and claim that the aorist tense is just another past tense. BUT THIS IS SIMPLY NOT TRUE!

In the Majority Text of the New Testament there are 28862 occurrences of verbs. Of these, 6836 occurrences are in the aorist tense and a further 5207 are in the second aorist tense. Together these 12043 occurrences represent OVER 41% of ALL verb occurrences in the whole New Testament! This represents the most frequently used tense in the New Testament ... only the 11765 occurrences of the present tense approach this number.

NOW HERE IS THE POINT: While the vast majority of these 12043 occurrences of the aorist tense are in English correctly represented by the past tense, there are nevertheless MANY HUNDREDS of places where the aorist VERY CLEARLY refers to THE PRESENT TENSE or to THE FUTURE TENSE! There is simply no way around this fact! And that is WHY scholars explain that this tense lays emphasis on "PRECISE EXACT ACCORDANCE WITH DETAILS WITHOUT REGARD FOR PAST, PRESENT OR FUTURE TIME"!

When a speaker or writer in the first century A.D. used this aorist tense, he was stressing that the details he was presenting were precise and correct ... regardless of the timing of the events he was discussing.

Now obviously, this concern for exactness and correctness of detail must for us in English have reference to one of the other tenses ... past, present or future. But in an English translation those tenses are DEDUCED FROM THEIR CONTEXT, and not arrived at because they are inherently implied in the aorist tense itself!

A FEW EXAMPLES OF THE AORIST TENSE:

Here are a few examples that very obviously refer to the present or the future, and where the Greek verb is in the aorist tense. All the CAPITALIZED VERBS in the following verses are in the aorist tense in Greek:

Matthew 3:17 = ... in whom I AM WELL PLEASED

Matthew 4:16 = ... light IS SPRUNG UP

Matthew 12:28 = ... the kingdom of God IS COME unto you

Matthew 13:44 = ... when a man hath found, HE HIDETH ...

Matthew 17:5 = ... in whom I AM WELL PLEASED

Matthew 23:2 = ... the Pharisees SIT in Moses' seat

Matthew 12:20 = ... a bruised reed SHALL HE NOT BREAK

1 Corinthians 16:12 = ... WHEN HE SHALL HAVE CONVENIENT TIME

1 John 2:24 = ... if that ... SHALL REMAIN IN YOU ...

Acts 2:29 = ... David, that HE IS DEAD ...; ... and BURIED

James 1:11 = ... but IT WITHERETH the grass

2 John 1:8 = ... but that WE RECEIVE a full reward

Romans 5:5 = ... Holy Spirit which IS GIVEN unto us

Romans 5:7 = ... some would even dare TO DIE

Romans 5:9 = ... now BEING JUSTIFIED

Romans 5:10 = ... we WERE RECONCILED to God

... BEING RECONCILED, we shall be saved

Romans 5:20 = ... the law ENTERED

... the offence MIGHT ABOUND

... grace DID MUCH MORE ABOUND

Romans 5:21 = ... sin HAS REIGNED

... grace MIGHT REIGN through righteousness.

It should be easy to see that in all the above statements the authors used the aorist tense to emphasise the correctness of details, rather than precision of timing. It is a relatively simple task to find several hundred additional examples of the aorist tense that illustrate this same point, where the context makes clear that either the present tense or the future tense is really intended, rather than the past tense, as is so often assumed.

The above-presented evidence PROVES that it is incorrect to claim that the aorist tense is "just another past tense in Greek". It very clearly is frequently used to also refer to the present and to the future!

THE VOICES AND MOODS OF GREEK VERBS:

Besides having "a tense", each verb usually also has "a voice" and "a mood". In English we use the six auxiliary verbs "be", "do", "have", "may", "shall" and "will" in their various forms to convey precise meanings; in biblical Greek all these variations are achieved by modifying the prefixes and the suffixes of the verbs themselves. However, we should keep in mind that ONLY THE TENSES affect the timing of the verb. "The voices" and "the moods" do not influence the timing of the tenses!

Specifically, the future tense is always future tense ... with every combination of voice and mood; the present tense is always present tense ... with every combination of voice and mood; the perfect tense is always perfect tense ... with every combination of voice and mood. And the aorist tense is always aorist tense!

But when translated into English, the aorist tense sometimes refers to the past tense, sometimes to the present tense and sometimes to the future tense. This I have demonstrated above.

The "voices" and "moods" have no influence on the timing!

Now let’s take a look at the word “saved”.

THE WORD "SAVED":

In the New Testament the Greek verb translated "saved" is "sozo". This verb is used 110 times in the Bible, or about once on every 3 pages of a 350-page New Testament. It is a common Greek word, used from Homer's time on down. Origen used it in the LXX to represent at least 5 different Hebrew words. It is used to mean deliverance from physical danger and suffering, and also to refer to the spiritual process of salvation.

The logical way to understand what God says about "being saved" is to examine all 110 places where this verb is used! In that way we make sure we don't ignore ANYTHING that God tells us about this verb. As we'll see, about one third of those 110 occurrences refer to "being saved" in a physical way ... and we can then narrow down our list.

Right! The word "sozo" is used exactly 110 times:

- 57 times it is used in the aorist tense;

- 30 times it is used in the future tense;

- 12 times it is used in the present tense;

- 10 times it is used in the perfect tense;

- 1 time it is used in the imperfect tense.

Now clearly, we cannot just look at some of the 12 times it is used in the present tense and ignore the 30 times it appears in the future tense and the 57 times it appears in the aorist tense. We have to look at ALL the occurrences to get a balanced view.

Where some confusion is going to arise is with the 57 occasions that it appears in the aorist tense ... because the English translators themselves had to CHOOSE to use the present, past or future tense. In many cases THE CONTEXT provided them with a clue for translating the word correctly into English; at other times they were guided by their own preconceived opinions.

We are going to find that sometimes they decided to translate the aorist tense into the past tense, sometimes they translated it into the present tense, and sometimes they translated it into the future tense ... yet in Greek it is always the one and same aorist tense.

PROOF THAT THE AORIST TENSE INCLUDES THE FUTURE TENSE:

At this point I'd like to look at one particular use of the word "save" in the aorist tense that proves beyond a doubt that this tense MUST at times refer to the future tense. We should establish this point because at our recent Regional Conference it was claimed that the aorist tense is the past tense. That claim is false!

Here is the transliterated Greek text of John 3:17.

> ou gar apesteilen ho theos ton huion autou eis ton kosmon hina krine ton kosmon all hina sothe ho kosmos di autou (John 3:17)

And here is the English text.

> For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him MIGHT BE SAVED. (John 3:17)

The verb "sothe" is the AORIST passive subjunctive of the verb "sozo". The expression "all hina sothe ho kosmos di autou" is translated into English as "but that the world through him MIGHT BE SAVED". It is THE CONTEXT which tells us that this rendering of the Greek Aorist tense into the English Future tense is correct.

We understand that "the world" has NOT YET "been saved"! And THEREFORE it simply would not make sense to translate the Aorist tense as ..."that the world through him HAS BEEN SAVED" or as ... "that the world through him IS SAVED"! Yet in other passages where it is not speaking about the world but about believers, the translators decided to translate THE VERY SAME GREEK TENSE as "who HAS SAVED US" (e.g. 2 Timothy 1:9).

We need to understand that when writers used the aorist tense, the TIMING of what they were talking about was not their primary concern. Their primary concern was the correctness of what they were describing. Of course the things they talked about applied to either past, present or future ... or sometimes even to all three; but their concern was that the details they recorded were CORRECT ... and the timing of those details was IMPLIED in the context for those who understood what was being talked about.

Anyway, John 3:17 shows beyond doubt that the aorist tense also includes references to the future ... and all translators acknowledge this by the way they have translated some of the 12043 occurrences of this aorist tense.

So now let's look at all of these uses of "sozo", grouped together in the tenses in which they are used. We are going to see that about one third of the time this word is used to refer to PHYSICAL healing or PHYSICAL protection from harm. All of these uses we can eliminate from our analysis, since they don't have any reference to salvation. In the verses quoted I will always present the translation of "sozo" in CAPITAL LETTERS so the English translation can be readily identified.

"SAVED" IN THE IMPERFECT TENSE:

It is used only once with this tense, in Mark 6:56 where it is translated as ... "as many as touched Him WERE MADE WHOLE". Here the word is used to refer to physical healing.

"SAVED" IN THE PERFECT TENSE:

It is used 10 times in this tense and of those 8 times are in connection with healing. Here are these 8 occurrences:

Matthew 9:22 = ... faith HAS MADE YOU WHOLE;

Mark 5:34 = ... faith HAS MADE YOU WHOLE;

Mark 10:52 = ... faith HAS MADE YOU WHOLE;

Luke 7 :50 = ... faith HAS SAVED YOU;

Luke 8:48 = ... faith HAS MADE YOU WHOLE;

Luke 17:19 = ... faith HAS MADE YOU WHOLE;

Luke 18:42 = ... faith HAS SAVED YOU;

Acts 4:9 = ... by what means HE IS MADE WHOLE.

The perfect tense is a past tense, and the translators translated it as such in all 8 places listed above. In the other 2 places where the perfect tense is used, the English translators decided to use the PRESENT tense, which is incorrect! In that case it should be the present CONTINUOUS tense. Here are the other 2 places:

Ephesians 2:5 = ... by grace YOU ARE SAVED;

Ephesians 2:8 = ... by grace YOU ARE SAVED.

The perfect passive participle "sesosmenoi" that is used here should really be translated as "YOU ARE BEING SAVED". But we'll examine these 2 verses more closely later.

"SAVED" IN THE PRESENT TENSE:

It is used 12 times in this tense. Let's look at these uses:

> And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on [us], all hope THAT WE SHOULD BE SAVED was then taken away. (Acts 27:20)

This verse talks about them being saved from drowning; so it need not concern us.

> Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was ABLE TO SAVE HIM from death, and was heard in that he feared; (Hebrews 5:7)
>
> Wherefore he is ABLE also TO SAVE THEM to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. (Hebrews 7:25)

These 2 verses only mention the ABILITY to save and don't comment on whether we are "saved" now or

only later in the resurrection.

> By which also YE ARE SAVED, IF ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. (1 Corinthians 15:2)

Notice that while Paul used the present passive indicative, translated as "ye ARE saved", he makes very clear that this is CONDITIONAL ON THEM CONTINUING in the things he had preached to them. The word "IF" introduces a condition!

> And IF the righteous scarcely BE SAVED, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? (1 Peter 4:18)

Notice that this is another "IF" statement. The Greek word translated as "scarcely" ("molis") means: with difficulty and toil, hardly, etc.. It is derived from the word "molos" which means "toil", an old English word for "LONG STRENUOUS FATIGUING LABOUR" (see Webster's Dictionary).

Notice this!

In this verse Peter is telling us that the righteous are saved by long strenuous and tiring labour! That labour is an ongoing thing until we die. The righteous are saved "by toiling" ... that's what Peter is saying in this verse. The word "scarcely" hides this meaning somewhat.

> Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto [even] baptism DOTH also now SAVE US (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: (1 Peter 3:20-21)

Here Peter has drawn AN ANALOGY between the 8 people who were "saved" (the Greek here is "diesothesan", the aorist passive indicative of “diasozo”, to bring safely through) on the Ark and Christians being saved by the resurrection of Christ. "BAPTISM" doesn't really save anybody, does it? Simon Magus was also "baptized". Peter is drawing an analogy.

> And others SAVE with fear, pulling [them] out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. (Jude 1:23)

Jude here used the word "save" in the imperative mood, which expresses a command. Notice how Jude has used the word "save". We Christians are to "SAVE" others ... yet that is not really something we can do; ONLY GOD can "save". So what did Jude actually mean? What did he expect Christians to do after reading this instruction? He expected Christians to set good examples in word and in deed, both to the world and to fellow church members; and to encourage those who were tempted to depart from God's ways. Jude meant "HELP OTHER PEOPLE"!

The remaining 5 uses of "save" in the present tense are all in the passive voice and the participle mood. Here they are:

> And the nations of them which ARE SAVED shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. (Revelation 21:24)

Revelation 21 is talking about a time yet future. In the vision picturing that future time the present tense is used. But it is not speaking about this present age.

> Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that BE SAVED? And he said unto them, (Luke 13:23)

This is a question from an unidentified man to Jesus Christ. The man asked about being saved in the present tense. Study Christ's answer in Luke 13:24-30. Notice that Jesus Christ Himself DID NOT AT ALL USE THE WORD "SAVE" TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION!

Instead Christ said:

> STRIVE TO ENTER in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. (Luke 13:24)

This is where Peter got his understanding from that being saved requires "STRIVING" (see again 1 Peter 4:18). Also, in this answer Jesus Christ refers to A PROCESS, rather than an instantaneous "being saved".

> Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as SHOULD BE SAVED. (Acts 2:47)

The English "should be saved" is future tense and therefore not a correct translation. The NIV and the NRSV both translate this tense correctly as "WERE BEING SAVED". Here is the NIV text.

> praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who WERE BEING SAVED. (Acts 2:47 NIV)

This is the continuous past tense and it refers to A PROCESS! And that is precisely correct. People who come into God's Church are IN THE PROCESS OF BEING SAVED!

> For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which ARE SAVED it is the power of God. (1 Corinthians 1:18)

> For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that ARE SAVED, and in them that perish: (2 Corinthians 2:15)

Consider this: these 3 Scriptures (Acts 2:47; 1 Corinthians 1:18; 2 Corinthians 2:15) all use the present passive participle of "sozo . The 3 uses are identical in tense, voice and mood. Here they are:

Acts 2:47 = sozomenous (this is the accusative case);

1 Corinthians 1:18 = sozomenois (this is the dative case);

2 Corinthians 2:15 = sozomenois (again the dative case).

It is correct to translate this in Acts 2:47 as "WHO WERE BEING SAVED", in reference to the process of salvation. Therefore the same word must also mean the same thing in the other 2 verses. In 1 Corinthians 1:18 Paul is saying: "... but unto us who are in the process of BEING SAVED it is the power of God". And in 2 Corinthians 2:15 Paul is saying: "for we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are in the process of BEING SAVED, and in them that are in the process of PERISHING".

Consider that "perish" is also the present tense in Greek. But Paul was clearly referring to people who were still alive ... but IN THE PROCESS OF PERISHING, by living contrary to God's ways.

THE INTERNAL EVIDENCE OF THESE 2 VERSES (i.e. references to 'perish') PROVES THAT PAUL WAS SPEAKING ABOUT A PROCESS!

That concludes the examination of all 12 places where the verb "sozo" is used in the present tense. Next we'll look at the 30 places where this verb is used in the future tense.

"SAVED" IN THE FUTURE TENSE:

In one case this verb is used with the participle.

> The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come TO SAVE HIM. (Matthew 27:49)

This is a comment from people who watched Christ's crucifixion; and it has nothing to do with "being saved". Of the remaining 29 occurrences in the future tense, 9 are in the active voice and indicative mood, while the other 20 are all in the passive voice and indicative mood. A few of these places are in reference to physical healing.

Let's first examine the 20 places where this is used in the passive voice:

> For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I SHALL BE WHOLE. (Matthew 9:21)

> For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I SHALL BE WHOLE. (Mark 5:28)
>
> But when Jesus heard [it], he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and SHE SHALL BE MADE WHOLE. (Luke 8:50)

The 3 verses above all refer to physical healing and don't concern "being saved".

> And ye shall be hated of all [men] for my name's sake: but he that endureth TO THE END SHALL BE SAVED. (Matthew 10:22)
>
> But he that shall endure UNTO THE END, THE SAME SHALL BE SAVED. (Matthew 24:13)
>
> And ye shall be hated of all [men] for my name's sake: but he that shall endure UNTO THE END, THE SAME SHALL BE SAVED. (Mark 13:13)

The speaker in these verses is JESUS CHRIST! Since 2 of these verses are in the same gospel, it means that Jesus Christ made this statement on 2 different occasions ... it was important enough to be repeated.

In these 3 verses Jesus Christ Himself stated that "being saved" is CONDITIONAL! It is conditional on "enduring unto the end". Prior to "the end" it is not yet determined whether a person is "saved" or not. In these verses Christ spoke in the future tense!

Now IF, as has been claimed by some, we "ARE NOW SAVED", then Jesus Christ's statements were misleading. But His statements are NOT misleading! They are plain and easy to understand. "Being saved" is conditional on enduring to the end!

> He that believeth and is baptized SHALL BE SAVED; but he that believeth not SHALL BE DAMNED. (Mark 16:16)

This is a part of the final instructions Christ gave to His disciples before He went "into heaven" (Mark 16:19). Notice that Christ said: "he that believes (PRESENT TENSE!) and is baptized (ALSO PRESENT TENSE!) shall be saved (FUTURE TENSE!)". If Christ meant that we "are saved" immediately after baptism, then He would have also used the present tense "is saved". But He used the FUTURE tense, just as He had done 3 chapters earlier (Mark 13:13).

THE CONTEXT of this verse also proves this point! Those who do not believe are also NOT "damned" immediately ... that "damnation" is also future. Christ was talking about people being exposed to the gospel and responding in one of two ways ... believing or not believing. Christ stated the consequences to both those responses in the future tense.

> I am the door: by me if any man enter in, HE SHALL BE SAVED, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. (John 10:9)

Christ didn't contradict Himself here. The person "shall be saved" after enduring unto the end.

> Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, HE SHALL DO WELL. (John 11:12)

Here Lazarus had died and Christ had said in the previous verse that "Lazarus sleeps". The response of the disciples: "... if he sleep, he shall be saved" was clearly meant in the sense of physical healing. They meant "he shall get well", i.e. recover. This use by the disciples was not a reference to salvation.

> And it shall come to pass, [that] whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord SHALL BE SAVED. (Acts 2:21)
>
> Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house SHALL BE SAVED. (Acts 11:14)
>
> And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and THOU SHALT BE SAVED, and thy house. (Acts 16:31)

All 3 of these verses refer to "becoming saved" as something in the future. In Acts 2:21 Peter is the speaker; in Acts 11:14 Peter is quoting Cornelius, the first non-Jew baptized; and in Acts 16:31 Paul and Silas were speaking to the Philippian jailor. All of them are in harmony with Christ's statement about being saved after enduring unto the end.

> Much more then, being now justified by his blood, WE SHALL BE SAVED from wrath through him. (Romans 5:9)
>
> For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, WE SHALL BE SAVED by his life. (Romans 5:10)

Here Paul was writing to members of the Church ... people who had repented, been baptized and received God's Spirit. Verse 9 makes very clear that we are NOT YET "SAVED" at the time when we are already justified! Verse 10 REPEATS THIS POINT ... we are not yet "saved" at the time we are reconciled to God.

NOTE!

In the entire book of Romans Paul does not use the word "sozo" in either the past tense or in the present tense! In this letter Paul only uses this word in the FUTURE TENSE and also twice in the AORIST TENSE! (One of those uses in the aorist tense is incorrectly translated into the English present tense, which we will see later.)

> Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant SHALL BE SAVED: (Romans 9:27)

> That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, THOU SHALT BE SAVED. (Romans 10:9)
>
> For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord SHALL BE SAVED. (Romans 10:13)
>
> And so all Israel SHALL BE SAVED: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: (Romans 11:26)

These 4 verses follow Paul's clearly spelled-out statements in Romans 5:9-10, and are in agreement with those statements. What Paul wrote in chapter 10 is obviously built on what he had already explained in chapter 5 ... it is not in opposition to his earlier statements. If people focus on what Paul said in Romans 10:9, 13 and ignore what he had explained 5 chapters earlier, they are dealing "deceitfully" with the Word of God (see 2 Corinthians 4:2).

> If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but HE HIMSELF SHALL BE SAVED; yet so as by fire. (1 Corinthians 3:15)

In this context Paul was talking about members of God's Church, people who some would claim WERE ALREADY SAVED AT THE TIME PAUL WROTE THIS ABOUT THEM! Yet again Paul shows that "being saved" is something future, even for people who are already in God's Church!

> Notwithstanding SHE SHALL BE SAVED IN CHILDBEARING, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety. (1 Timothy 2:15)

While it can be debated as to exactly what Paul had in mind here, the point for us to note is that the verb is here used in the future tense, and thus this verse has no impact on "being saved now".

That covers all 20 places where the future tense is used in the passive voice. Now let's look at the additional 9 uses of the future tense with the active voice.

> And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for HE SHALL SAVE HIS PEOPLE from their sins. (Matthew 1:21)

There is nothing in this statement by the angel to Joseph that implies "being saved" immediately upon repentance and baptism.

> For whosoever WILL SAVE his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same SHALL SAVE IT. (Mark 8:35)
>
> For whosoever WILL SAVE his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same SHALL SAVE IT. (Luke 9:24)

(The "will save" in these two verses is in the aorist tense, active voice and infinitive mood. It emphasises that what follows really applies to those who have this motivation.)

These two verses also state that "being saved" is still future for those who have the right motivation.

> For what knowest thou, O wife, WHETHER THOU SHALT SAVE [thy] husband? or how knowest thou, O man, WHETHER THOU SHALT SAVE [thy] wife? (1 Corinthians 7:16)

The future tense is used twice in this verse and there is nothing here to imply "being saved" immediately upon conversion.

> Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this THOU SHALT both SAVE THYSELF, and them that hear thee. (1 Timothy 4:16)

NOTE!

Here Paul is writing to an evangelist in God's Church who was in possession of God's Spirit. Yet he didn't say, in modern terms:

"Hang in there, Timothy, because you are already saved". Instead Paul said: "Hang in there, Timothy, so that eventually you SHALL BE saved".

> And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and WILL PRESERVE [ME] UNTO HIS HEAVENLY KINGDOM: to whom [be] glory for ever and ever. Amen. (2 Timothy 4:18)

Here Paul said that God ..."will SAVE me unto His heavenly kingdom". The translators disguised this somewhat by using the word "preserve". Other translations acknowledge that the word is "save", for example the RSV and the New RSV. Here is the NRSV text.

> The Lord WILL rescue me from every evil attack and SAVE ME for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen. (2 Timothy 4:18 NRSV)

THIS IS A VERY INTERESTING STATEMENT FROM PAUL!

The expression "unto his heavenly kingdom" is translated from "eis ten basileian autou ten epouranion". The preposition "eis" used here governs the accusative case and it denotes, according to Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, "entrance into, or direction and limit". Paul is talking about ENTRANCE INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

Paul used the future tense ..."the Lord shall save me unto His heavenly kingdom"! In no way can it be inferred from this statement that Paul thought that he was ALREADY "saved"! Or that he was ALREADY in the kingdom of God!

Let's move on to the last 2 occurrences of the future tense.

> And the prayer of faith SHALL SAVE THE SICK, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. (James 5:15)
>
> Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way SHALL SAVE A SOUL from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. (James 5:20)

We have seen that the word "save" is freely used throughout the New Testament to refer to "physical healing". At least 5 times we saw the expression "your faith has made you whole (sozo)" (Matthew 9:22; Mark 5:34; 10:52; Luke 8:48; 17:19). It seems that James meant the same thing here ... "and the prayer of faith shall make the sick whole", copying the words of Christ.

Five verses later James seems to have had salvation in mind. At any rate, both verses use the verb in the future tense and do not in any way hint at "being saved now".

That covers every occurrence of the word "save" in the future tense. The remaining 57 occurrences of "sozo" are all in the aorist tense.

"SAVED" IN THE AORIST TENSE:

As we look at these Scriptures, it will many times be obvious that in English it must be expressed in the past tense, or in the present tense, or in the future tense. The context will readily allow us to make such deductions. At other times, however, it is not immediately obvious which tense should be used in English ... and it is then that a translator's own ideas and perceptions influence his choice of tense for the verb in English. In such cases it may be correct ... or it may be wrong.

However, we should keep in mind that in all of these verses THE TIMING was not the author's chief concern! If the timing had been the important thing, THEN the author would have expressed himself in Greek in the past tense or in the present tense or in the future tense! His choice of the Aorist tense shows he laid more stress on "the WHAT" (i.e. correct details) than on "the WHEN" (i.e. the timing of what he described).

IT IS NOT LOGICAL TO BUILD AN ARGUMENT ON THE ENGLISH TENSE OF A GREEK VERB THAT IS USED IN THE AORIST TENSE, UNLESS IT CAN BE SHOWN BEYOND QUESTION THAT THE ENGLISH TENSE IS THE ONLY POSSIBLE CORRECT TRANSLATION OF THE VERB IN QUESTION!

This is especially the case when such an English translation is used in an attempt to oppose or contradict another Scripture where in Greek the future tense is used, since it is self-evident that the

future tense really does refer to THE FUTURE!

Let's now look at where "sozo" is used in the Aorist tense:

Earlier we already looked at 2 places where the Aorist tense is used in the same verse with the future tense:

Mark 8:35 = ... whoever wants TO SAVE his life ...

Luke 9:24 = ... whoever wants TO SAVE his life ... .

> HE SAVED OTHERS; himself HE CANNOT SAVE. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. (Matthew 27:42)
>
> Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, HE SAVED OTHERS; himself HE CANNOT SAVE. (Mark 15:31)
>
> And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided [him], saying, HE SAVED OTHERS; LET HIM SAVE HIMSELF, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. (Luke 23:35)

In these 3 verses the Aorist tense is used 6 times, always to refer to saving one's life in a physical way.

> And his disciples came to [him], and awoke him, saying, Lord, SAVE US: we perish. (Matthew 8:25)
>
> But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, SAVE ME. (Matthew 14:30)
>
> And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest [it] in three days, SAVE THYSELF. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. (Matthew 27:40)
>
> SAVE THYSELF, and come down from the cross. (Mark 15:30)
>
> And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, SAVE THYSELF. (Luke 23:37)
>
> And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, SAVE THYSELF and us. (Luke 23:39)
>
> For whosoever WILL SAVE his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. (Matthew 16:25)

In these 7 verses the word is also used to refer to saving physical life from death.

> Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, SAVE ME from this hour: but for this

cause came I unto this hour. (John 12:27)

Here Christ was praying for protection from the trial that lay ahead for Him. Did Christ feel that He was "already saved"?

Let's look at a number of places where the verb is used in the active voice with the infinitive mood. This is generally expressed as "TO SAVE".

For the Son of man is come TO SAVE that which was lost. (Matthew 18:11)

And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? TO SAVE LIFE, or to kill? But they held their peace. (Mark 3:4)

Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? TO SAVE LIFE, or to destroy [it]? (Luke 6:9)

For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but TO SAVE [THEM]. And they went to another village. (Luke 9:56)

Whosoever shall seek TO SAVE his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. (Luke 17:33)

For the Son of man is come to seek and TO SAVE that which was lost. (Luke 19:10)

For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching TO SAVE them that believe. (1 Corinthians 1:21)

This [is] a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world TO SAVE SINNERS; of whom I am chief. (1 Timothy 1:15)

There is one lawgiver, who IS ABLE TO SAVE and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another? (James 4:12)

In the above 9 verses we don't have any statements about actually "BEING SAVED"; so we can leave them out of our analysis.

What [doth it] profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith SAVE him? (James 2:14)

Here the infinitive is presented in a question. Thus this verse also does not feature in our examination.

Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, WHICH IS ABLE TO SAVE YOUR SOULS. (James 1:21)

Notice this verse!

Here James is writing to members of God's Church and he says that the Word of God ..."IS ABLE TO SAVE THEM"! He is clearly implying that his readers (Church-members with God's Spirit!) were not YET saved!

Earlier we saw John 3:17 where the aorist tense very clearly refers to the future tense. Now let's look at a few more verses where this aorist tense must also be translated by the future tense:

> To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all [men], that I MIGHT by all means SAVE SOME. (1 Corinthians 9:22)
>
> And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that THEY MIGHT BE SAVED. (2 Thessalonians 2:10)
>
> Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, LEST THEY should believe and BE SAVED. (Luke 8:12)
>
> But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that YE MIGHT BE SAVED. (John 5:34)
>
> And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do TO BE SAVED? (Acts 16:30)
>
> Even as I please all [men] in all [things], not seeking mine own profit, but the [profit] of many, that THEY MAY BE SAVED. (1 Corinthians 10:33)
>
> Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that THEY MIGHT BE SAVED, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost. (1 Thessalonians 2:16)
>
> To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit MAY BE SAVED in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1 Corinthians 5:5)

In all of the above 8 verses the English future tense is a translation of the Greek aorist tense, again proving that the aorist tense does in fact refer to the future MANY TIMES! And all the translators freely acknowledge this by the way they have translated this tense into English in these verses.

> But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith HATH MADE THEE WHOLE. And the woman WAS MADE WHOLE from that hour. (Matthew 9:22)

(Earlier we saw that "hath made you whole" is translated from the Greek perfect tense.) Here "was made whole" is the aorist tense.

Physical healing is the subject of this verse, as is also the case with the following verse:

> They also which saw [it] told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils WAS HEALED. (Luke 8:36)

The translators could have said "was saved" instead of "was healed", though "healing" is certainly appropriate here.

> And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: [I pray thee], come and lay thy hands on her, that SHE MAY BE HEALED; and she shall live. (Mark 5:23)

Notice that these last 2 verses both refer to "healing", but in the first case the aorist tense is translated into the past tense and in the next case the same aorist tense it translated into the future tense. It is THE CONTEXT of the verse itself that makes clear which tense is appropriate in English.

> The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith TO BE HEALED, (Acts 14:9)

Again a reference to "healing".

> Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, YE CANNOT BE SAVED. (Acts 27:31)

Paul here meant "saved from drowning".

> And except those days should be shortened, there SHOULD NO FLESH BE SAVED: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. (Matthew 24:22)
>
> And except that the Lord had shortened those days, NO FLESH SHOULD BE SAVED: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days. (Mark 13:20)

In this context Christ was speaking about the survival of human life, not about salvation. Again the aorist is rendered into the future tense in English.

> When his disciples heard [it], they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then CAN BE SAVED? (Matthew 19:25)
>
> And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then CAN BE SAVED? (Mark 10:26)
>
> And they that heard [it] said, Who then CAN BE SAVED? (Luke 18:26)

Here the question was about entering into the kingdom of God, so salvation is the subject. The disciples

were asking a question. Jesus had the perfect opportunity to explain that they would be "saved" in a little while ... on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) when the Holy Spirit was given ... if that were indeed the case. But He didn't do anything of the kind.

Notice!

The question was about "becoming saved". Yet in the answer He gave, Jesus Christ did not even use the word "saved". Instead, after Peter had referred to the sacrifices they had been willing to make, Christ explained that they could look forward to ETERNAL LIFE in the age to come (see Mark's and Luke's accounts). So Jesus answered a question about "becoming saved" by referring to when they would in the future receive "eternal life".

These 3 accounts are in full agreement with what Mr. Armstrong's always taught about "becoming saved".

> And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but TO SAVE the world. (John 12:47)

This Scripture does not indicate "when" people "are saved".

> If by any means I may provoke to emulation [them which are] my flesh, and MIGHT SAVE some of them. (Romans 11:14)

This is another reference where the aorist tense is translated into the future tense in English.

> Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we MUST BE SAVED. (Acts 4:12)

Again no hint at "being saved now", in this life.

> Who will have all men TO BE SAVED, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. (1 Timothy 2:4)

Again this has no reference as to exactly when people "are saved".

> And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, SAVE YOURSELVES from this untoward generation. (Acts 2:40)

This is the imperative mood in the passive voice. There is no reference to when this "saving" would be

achieved.

> And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, [and said], Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, YE CANNOT BE SAVED. (Acts 15:1)

This is the account where certain Jews attempted to link salvation to the observance of the ritualistic laws. Nothing is said about when people "are saved".

> But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ WE SHALL BE SAVED, even as they. (Acts 15:11)

Notice the Greek text of this verse! Peter is the speaker.

> alla dia tes charitos kuriou Iesou Christou pisteuomen sothenai kath on tropon kakeinoi (Acts 15:11 TR)

The verb "sothenai" is the aorist passive infinitive of "sozo". The different MSS agree on this. However, because it is the aorist tense, people can disagree as to how this should be translated into English.

The KJV has rendered it as "we shall be saved". The RSV, published in 1946, agrees with this. But the NIV, published in 1984, reflects the modern teaching about "being saved" in this verse. Notice:

> No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that WE ARE SAVED, just as they are." (Acts 15:11 NIV)

The New RSV, published in 1989, again agrees with the KJV and the (old) RSV, as can be seen here:

> On the contrary, we believe that WE WILL BE SAVED through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will." (Acts 15:11 NRSV)

The point is: because it is the aorist tense, when translating this into English people can argue over what the tense should be. HOWEVER, there is something that is overlooked in such debates. And that is simply this:

> Peter used the INFINITIVE mood!

The infinitive mood means "TO SAVE"! That, added to the fact that by using the aorist tense Peter was not really emphasising the timing of when we "are saved", should resolve the argument.

The Interlinear Bible, published by Hendrickson Publishers and edited by Jay P. Green, Sr. correctly reflects this infinitive mood. They translate "sothenai" as "TO BE SAVED" and in the marginal translation render this verse as:

> But through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we believe (in order) TO BE SAVED according to which manner they also (believed).

This translation retains the infinitive mood of the original Greek verb.

Further, the fact that different translations have chosen to translate "sothenai" into different English tenses (i.e. specifically the KJV vs. the NIV) only illustrates that an argument should NEVER be built on the English tense into which a Greek verb in the aorist tense has been translated.

Let's look at another verse:

> I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, HAVING SAVED THE PEOPLE out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. (Jude 1:5)

Jude was here referring to Israel having come out of Egypt, not to salvation. So this verse has no influence on our discussion.

Right! We have now looked at all but 3 of the 57 occasions where "sozo" is used in the aorist tense. We have seen many verses where it refers to the past tense, many verses where it refers to the present tense and many verses where it refers to the future tense. We have also seen cases where translators are divided over which tense is correct (e.g. Acts 15:11). This division is due not to any inherent difficulties in the Greek, but rather to the different doctrinal perspectives with which the translators themselves approach the verses in question.

Let's now look at the remaining 3 verses in the aorist tense:

> For WE ARE SAVED BY HOPE: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? (Romans 8:24)
>
> te gar elpidi esothemen elpis de blepomene ouk estin elpis ho gar blepei tis ti kai elpizei (Romans 8:24 TR)

"Esothemen" is the aorist passive indicative of "sozo". If Paul had wanted to convey the present tense "we are saved", then he would have used the present tense! With 3 other verbs in this verse Paul used the present tense, but NOT with "sozo". Here are the 3 present tense verbs in this verse:

- "is seen" = present passive participle

- "seeth" = present active indicative

- "hope for" = present active indicative.

It is equally correct to translate "esothemen" as "we shall be saved (by hope)". "Hoping" has to do with the future ... it focuses on the future! Further, we have in the course of this article looked at MANY examples of the aorist tense requiring the future tense in English.

Look at the internal evidence of this verse ... the rest of the wording Paul used:

When Paul said: "BUT hope that is seen is not hope", he was focusing on the future! "Hope" has to do with the future! And "hoping" requires TIME! "Hoping" is not something instantaneous, something we do for 3 seconds. Paul explained that we hope for the things that we cannot yet see. The hoping Paul talks about requires A LOT OF TIME ... hoping for the resurrection. The "hoping" must continue until the reality comes about; that is Paul's point.

Thus it makes much more sense to say:

> We SHALL BE SAVED by hope (which we must continue to have until our dying day!): but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth (once we have experienced the resurrection!), why does he yet hope for (then there is no NEED for hope)? (Romans 8:24)

At any rate, it is not logical to build a doctrine on the foundation of an English tense derived from a Greek verb in the aorist tense! So let's look at the next verse.

> Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy HE SAVED US, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; (Titus 3:5-6)
>
> ouk ex ergon ton en dikaiosune on epoiesamen hemeis alla kata ton autou eleon esosen hemas dia loutrou paliggenesias kai anakainoseos pneumatos hagiou ou execheen eph hemas plousios dia Iesou Christou tou soteros hemon (Titus 3:5-6 TR)

In Titus 3:6 Paul is talking about the Holy Spirit, to which believers have access through the sacrifice of Christ. Paul says in Titus 3:5 ... "esosen hemas dia loutrou paliggenesias kai anakainoseos pneumatos hagiou". "Esosen" is the aorist active indicative of "sozo". There is no grammatical reason why this could not be rendered in English as "he will save", future instead of "he saved", past tense. "Dia loutrou" means "through the washing".

It does not make sense to assign the present tense to Paul's use of the aorist tense here for the purpose of contradicting PAUL'S use of the future tense in Romans 5:9-10 (which we examined earlier).

Let's look at the last verse with the aorist tense.

> WHO HATH SAVED US, and called [us] with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, (2 Timothy 1:9)

The clue to correctly understanding this verse lies in correctly understanding the context. The next verse starts with "but", showing that Paul is making a contrast. Notice:

> But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: (2 Timothy 1:10)

When we put these two verses together we see the following:

> God "has saved" ("sosantos", aorist active participle) us and "called (us)" ("kalesantos", aorist active participle) with a holy calling ... which "was given" ("dotheisan", aorist passive participle) us in Christ Jesus before "the world began" ("chronon aionion"). But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who "has abolished" ("katargesantos", aorist active participle) death, and hath brought life and immortality ... .

Notice that Paul is using all these verbs in the participle mood of the Aorist tense, either active or passive voice.

The aorist active participle "sosantos" is translated into the English past tense "has saved"; the aorist active participle "katargesantos" is translated into the English past tense "has abolished". These two verbs within the same context are identical in tense, voice and mood.

It should be obvious that it is incorrect to translate these two verbs here into the English past tense for the following reason: Death is still very much with us today! Death has not yet been abolished! And, in fact, God reveals that it will not be abolished UNTIL the time of Revelation 20:14.

> And DEATH and hell WERE CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE. This is the second death. (Revelation 20:14)

That is the time when death will finally be abolished!

Paul did not mean to say "death HAS BEEN abolished (past tense); that's why he didn't use one of the past tenses! He used the aorist tense to lay emphasis on THE PROCESS that Christ's coming has set in motion. The same is true regarding the verb "sozo" ... Paul used the aorist tense to emphasise THE PROCESS of salvation that has been set in motion.

The expression "has abolished death" (past tense) is simply not true! That should be obvious. This Scripture is one example where the translators' own perceptions and religious biases prevented them from understanding the context correctly. Therefore they could not assign the correct tense in English to this aorist tense Greek verb.

Right, we have now looked at all 57 occurrences of the verb "sozo" in the aorist tense. Two verses I left out earlier are Ephesians 2, verses 5 and 8. We have now looked at the other 108 uses of this verb, and have examined every context in which it is used. Let's now look at these last two verses:

> Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace YE ARE SAVED;) (Ephesians 2:5)
>
> For by grace ARE YE SAVED through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God: (Ephesians 2:8)

In both cases this is the perfect tense, passive voice and participle mood. The correct meaning, one that is in total agreement with EVERY OTHER USE OF THIS VERB, is given in the Interlinear Bible (Hendrickson Publishers), which reads for both these verses, both in the text itself, and also in the marginal translation:

> "... by grace you ARE BEING SAVED ..."

"Becoming saved" is A PROCESS! And that is what Paul is pointing out in Ephesians, just as he did in the other Scriptures we have examined. By explaining these two verses NOW, after we've looked at all of the 108 other verses, I hope this is easier to understand. At the outset it could have appeared as if I was simply selecting one particular translation to fit my own prejudices. By now it should be evident that this literal translation in the Interlinear Bible is in total harmony with all the other verses we have examined.

We have now looked at every single use of the verb "sozo", "to save" in the New Testament. None have been omitted. The picture should be fairly clear by now.

<u>A BASIC POINT TO REMEMBER:</u>

We must always keep the right priorities in mind. Jesus Christ is the Son of God! Paul was, by comparison, "only an apostle" of Jesus Christ.

THEREFORE we should always explain Paul's words in terms of what Jesus Christ said! It should NEVER be a case of having to understand what Christ said in terms of the words of the Apostle Paul! What Paul said must "fit into" what Jesus Christ said. It should never be a case of "fitting Christ's statements" into what Paul said.

JESUS CHRIST ALWAYS TAKES PRIORITY!

Now, as we have seen, it is not a matter of Paul ever really contradicting Christ's teachings, not at all. But the point is this:

> When we have a CLEAR statement in the FUTURE tense by Jesus Christ on the one hand and a statement in the AORIST tense by the apostle Paul on the other hand, then the statement by Paul in the aorist tense MUST be understood in terms of the clear statement by Jesus Christ! Anything else would make Jesus Christ out to be a liar, by questioning His credibility!

That is a basic premise to correctly understanding any of the things Jesus Christ Himself taught.

A SUMMARY OF WHAT WE HAVE SEEN:

Let's briefly summarize what we have covered:

1. THE PROBLEM: People have built their doctrine of "already saved" on the English tenses of verbs in the New Testament. This is a false foundation. Any argument based on the tense a verb is given in English is meaningless.

2. Specifically, people have taken half a dozen or so verses from the writings of the Apostle Paul and attempted to build a doctrine on these verses.

3. When examining verbs in the New Testament, the only correct foundation is to examine the tense of the verb in the original Greek. IF that tense has been correctly translated into English, THEN the argument can proceed to the English form of the verb.

4. However, there is one tense in biblical Greek for which we have no equivalent in English. That is the aorist tense. It is a tense in which "timing" is not emphasised ... something strange from our perspective, in which every tense MUST have a specific sense of "timing".

5. We have examined every single occurrence of the Greek verb "sozo", 110 in all. We grouped these 110 occurrences (sometimes two in a single verse) into the different GREEK tenses in which they are used.

6. We also saw that "sozo" frequently refers to physical healing and to protection from physical harm. About one third of the uses of this verb are with this meaning.

7. We saw MANY EXAMPLES where the aorist tense simply MUST be translated into the English future tense and into the English present tense. This contradicts the claim that the aorist tense is simply "another past tense" in biblical Greek.

8. The point with the aorist tense is this: it is THE CONTEXT in which this tense is used that makes clear what time-frame the aorist is intended to have reference to. Speakers and writers who used this tense assumed their hearers and readers already knew the correct timing the verb should have reference to.

9. We have seen a number of places where the tense of the verb "sozo" is, in fact, translated incorrectly in most English Bibles. In some cases the evidence for this can be found in the immediate context of the verse in question; at other times a comparison with other places where the same tense is translated differently makes this clear.

10. Generally, an Interlinear Bible is a good source to check for accuracy of translation ... though even those editors are obviously not free from biases.

11. It really boils down to 1 Corinthians 2:10-11.

> But God hath revealed [them] unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so THE THINGS OF GOD knoweth no man, but [by] the Spirit of God. (1 Corinthians 2:10-11)

That's what the apostle Paul said ... and he knew this!

12. We examined all 30 places where the Greek future tense is used. We examined a number of verses where JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF showed that "being saved" is CONDITIONAL on "enduring to the end" and that it is FUTURE! These clear, unequivocal statements include Matthew 10:22; 24:13; Mark 13:13; 16:16; Luke 9:24 and John 10:9.

13. We also saw that Paul uses the future tense directly in several passages about "being saved". These include Romans 5:9-10; Roman 10:9,13; 1 Corinthians 3:15; 1 Timothy 4:16 and

2 Timothy 4:18. ROMANS 5:9-10 is basic in Paul's thinking!

14. We examined all 57 occurrences of this verb in the aorist tense. Specifically, we noted that certain verses, which are foundational to the claim that we are "already saved", are in fact in the aorist tense. This means that it is erroneous to build an argument on the past tense these verbs are given in the English Bibles. The verses in this category include Romans 8:24; 2 Timothy 1:9 and Titus 3:5.

15. We have not found a single verse that supports the idea that we "are saved" now, in this age. Rather, this idea is based on taking a few verses out of context and relying on the verbal tenses found in the English Bibles. No attempt is made to establish whether the tenses in English are in fact a correct reflection of the tenses in the original Greek text.

16. We have to conclude that Mr. Armstrong was correct in what he taught about "being saved" and that the new teaching is in error.

17. AN OVERVIEW OF ALL THE SCRIPTURES THAT REFER TO "BECOMING SAVED" OR "BEING SAVED":

A) Of the 30 times this verb is used in the Greek future tense, 16 places refer to "becoming saved". These 16 places are:

- Matthew 10:22

- Matthew 24:13

- Mark 13:13

- Mark 16:16

- John 10:9

- Acts 2:21

- Acts 11:14

- Acts 16:31

- Romans 5:9

- Romans 5:10

- Romans 10:9

- Romans 10:13

-1 Corinthians 3:15

- 1 Timothy 4:16

- 2 Timothy 4:18

- James 5:20

ALL OF THESE VERSES CLEARLY REFER TO "BEING SAVED" AS FUTURE!

B) Of the 10 times this verb is used in the Greek perfect tense, only 2 verses refer to "being saved". These 2 places are:

- Ephesians 2:5

- Ephesians 2:8

The perfect passive participle used in both these verses is correctly translated in the Interlinear as the continuous present "YOU ARE BEING SAVED", referring to the process of salvation. The incorrect English translation "you ARE saved" implies the PRESENT tense and the INDICATIVE mood (which refers to a clear, simple statement of fact). But the indicative mood is not used at all in these two verses with "saved".

C) Of the 57 times this verb is used in the Greek aorist tense, only 14 references give any indication regarding when we are "saved". In 11 of these 14 cases the aorist tense is translated into the English FUTURE tense. These 11 places are:

- John 3:17

- John 5:34

- Luke 8:12

- Romans 11:14

- 1 Corinthians 9:22

- 1 Corinthians 10:33

- 1 Corinthians 5:5

- Acts 15:11

- Acts 16:30

- 2 Thessalonians 2:10

- 2 Thessalonians 2:16

THE FUTURE IS CLEARLY INDICATED IN THESE VERSES!

In 1 verse it is translated into the English present tense, Romans 8:24. The context is "HOPING", which always implies the future, and it is equally correct to translate the aorist tense here as "FOR WE SHALL BE SAVED BY HOPE ...", in full harmony with the 11 Scriptures just referred to above.

In 2 verses it is translated into the English past tense, in Titus 3:5 and in 2 Timothy 1:9. The context of 2 Timothy 1:9 makes clear that the English past tense is incorrect here because DEATH also has not yet been abolished. In Titus 3:5 the aorist tense can be equally correctly translated as "but according to his

mercy HE WILL SAVE US ...", as in the above 11 other Scriptures.

D) The one time this verb is used in the Greek imperfect tense is a reference to healing and has no impact on our discussion.

E) Of the 12 times this verb is used in the Greek present tense, only 7 places refer to "being saved".

In 2 cases they are "IF" statements, which therefore imply CONDITIONS! These 2 verses are:

1 Corinthians 15:2 and 1 Peter 4:18.

In 2 further cases the PROCESS of being saved is very clearly being referred to, since the verb "perish" is also used in the present tense in these 2 verses. These 2 verses are 1 Corinthians 1:18 and 2 Corinthians 2:15.

In 1 further case the Greek present tense is in the KJV rendered into the future tense "such as SHOULD BE SAVED". This is corrected in the NIV and the NRSV as "those who WERE BEING SAVED". Again the PROCESS of being saved is the subject. This verse is Acts 2:47.

In 1 further case the Greek present tense is used in the imperative mood, which expresses a command. In this verse WE ARE TOLD TO SAVE OTHERS, something we cannot really do. Only God can "save" people in the sense we are examining. This reference is Jude 1:23.

In the last case where this verb is used in the Greek present tense, Peter was drawing an ANALOGY in which he said that "BAPTISM does also NOW save us" in the same way that "THE ARK saved 8 people in the days of Noah".

That's all of the places where the Greek verb "sozo" is used in the whole New Testament!

None of the uses in the present tense support "being already saved now". The 16 uses in the future tense clearly place "being saved" as a future event. The 14 uses in the Aorist tense also place "being saved" as a future event.

What more can we say?

A FINAL THOUGHT:

Why would Jesus Christ have used a Greek word that commonly means to be healed and "TO BE MADE WHOLE" to refer to the process we call "salvation"? WHY describe a SPIRITUAL CONDITION with this word?

What happens when we "are saved"?

We are made whole! That's what happens! And as long as we are still physical, we simply are NOT "made whole". No way!

Paul explained VERY CLEARLY that in this life we are not going to be "made whole". It is THE HOPE of "being made whole" that Paul referred to in Romans 8:24. As long as we are still in this life, we are still in the stage of "GROANING".

> For we know that the whole creation GROANETH and travaileth in pain together until now. (Romans 8:22)
>
> And not only [they], but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, EVEN WE OURSELVES GROAN within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, [to wit], the redemption of our body. (Romans 8:23)

"Groaning" is a very clear sign that a person has not yet been "made whole"! And that is what the word "saved" means ... being made whole.

Frank W. Nelte