

Word Order and Emphasis in Greek

- 1) Due to the linear nature of the Greek language, in general, words at the beginning of a sentence/clause have more prominence than words at the end.
- 2) Emphasis in Greek is oftentimes shown by words occurring out of their customary order in relation to other words in the sentence.
- 3) The normal order of words in Greek is not well understood yet. It has generally been taught that for a sentence on the whole, the normal order would be “verb - subject - object/complement”. However, it has been shown that when a subject of the verb is explicitly stated, it oftentimes comes first in the sentence. Thus a more accurate order may instead be “subject - verb - object/complement”
- 4) Emphatic Word Order
 - a) Splitting of Syntactical Units
 - i) E.g. John 7:38b “ποταμοὶ ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας αὐτοῦ ρεύσουσιν ὕδατος ζῶντος.” “**from within him** shall flow **rivers** of living water.”
 - ii) 2 Cor. 7:1 “ταύτας οὖν ἔχοντες τὰς ἐπαγγελίας,” “Having therefore **these** promises,”
 - iii) 3 John 4 “μειζοτέραν τούτων οὐκ ἔχω χαράν,” “**Greater** joy have I none than **this**,”
 - b) “Nominative Absolutes” placed at beginning of clause, without regard to the syntax focuses on the subject.
 - i) E.g. Rev. 3:12 “ὁ νικῶν ποιήσω αὐτὸν στῆλον” “**He that overcometh**, I will make him a pillar”
 - c) Extra Words or Repeated Words
 - i) E.g. 1 Cor. 1:24 “Χριστὸν θεοῦ δύναμιν καὶ θεοῦ σοφίαν” “**Christ** the power **of God**, and the wisdom **of God**.”
 - d) Direct Object or Predicate Nominatives/Adjectives preceding subject and/or verb.
 - i) E.g. Heb. 4:12 “Ζῶν γὰρ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐνεργῆς” “For the word of God is **living**, and active,”
 - ii) John 19:18 “ὅπου αὐτὸν ἐσταύρωσαν, καὶ μετ’ αὐτοῦ ἄλλους δύο” “where they crucified **him**, and with him two others,”
 - e) Genitive nouns/pronouns preceding the noun they modify
 - i) E.g. Matt. 27:54 “Ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς ἦν οὗτος.” “**Truly** this was the Son **of God**.”
 - ii) 1 Cor. 2:7 “ἀλλὰ λαλοῦμεν θεοῦ σοφίαν ἐν μυστηρίῳ,” “but we speak **God's** wisdom in a mystery,”
 - iii) See 1 Cor. 1:24 above.
 - f) Prepositional Phrases or Indirect Object preceding the verb.
 - i) E.g. John 1:46 “Ἐκ Ναζαρέτ δύναται τι ἀγαθὸν εἶναι;” “Can any good thing come **out of Nazareth**?”
- 5) Intrinsically Emphatic Word Classes (see “Black” pg. 183)
 - a) Adverbs (αὐτῶς, οὕτως, εὐχα)
 - b) Emphatic Personal Pronouns
 - c) Emphatic Possessive Adjectives
 - d) Nominative Personal Pronouns (ἐγώ, ἡμεῖς)
 - i) E.g. John 10:11 “Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός.” “**I** am the **good** shepherd.”
 - e) Intensive Pronouns (αὐτός)
 - i) E.g. Matt. 1:21 “αὐτὸς γὰρ σώσει τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν.” “for it is **he** that shall save his people from their sins.”
 - f) Intensive Adverbs (νῦν, οὐκ)
 - i) E.g. Eph. 2:13 “νῦν δὲ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ὑμεῖς οἱ ποτε ὄντες μακρὰν ἐγενήθητε ἐγγὺς ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ.” “But **now in Christ Jesus** you that once were far off are made near in the blood of Christ.”
 - g) Double Negatives (οὐ μή)
 - i) Mark 14:31 “οὐ μή σε ἀπαρνήσομαι.” “I will **not** deny **you**.”