

Singular or Plural?

Through Silvanus, our faithful brother (for so I regard *him*), I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. **Stand firm** in it! (1 Peter 5:12)

Many languages, like Greek, have a clear distinction between singular and plural words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc.). English offers some differentiation, such as “he” or “she” for singular and “they” for plural. But the second-person pronoun, “you,” does not. As a result, there can be some degree of ambiguity when the context does not clarify the number of persons addressed.

As an example, consider a command near the end of 1 Peter in the New Testament. At the end of the verse, 1 Peter 5:12 includes the command, “Stand firm!” (NASB). Is Peter’s command directed to each member of the audience individually using a singular verb? Or is the instruction for the entire corporate body together? How are we to apply the command? Is it my individual responsibility to stand firm in the “true grace of God”? Or do I need to be in relationship with others in a way that contributes to our mutual solidarity? Naturally, the expected answer would emphasize the corporate nature of the church and the importance of support. But does the text support that impression? Good inductive study requires knowing what the text says. Is the command singular or plural?

Several online resources can help determine the answer to this question.

Blue Letter Bible

https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb95/1pe/5/1/t_conc_1156012

Using Blue Letter Bible, select the English translation you are using. Then scroll down to the word of interest and click the “Tools” button to the left. The parsing will be displayed (using the Blue Letter Bible abbreviation scheme) in the bubble to the right.

English (NASB) [?]	Strong's	Inflected, Root & Transliterated	Parsing [?]
of God.		θεοῦ	
Stand firm	G2476	στήτε	V-AAM-2P

The abbreviated analysis, V-AAM-2P, stands for “Verb – Aorist Active Imperative – 2nd Person **Plural**.” Hover the mouse over the abbreviation to display the full explanation.

Transliteration: stēte
From the root ἵστημι (G2476)
Verb - Aorist Active Imperative - 2nd Person Plural
English: Stand firm

https://biblehub.com/interlinear/1_peter/5-12.htm

Bible Hub

Multi

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◀ 1 Peter 5:12 ▶

1 Peter 5 - Click for Chapter

1223 [e] Dia 12 Διὰ Through Prep	4610 [e] Silouanou Σιλουανου , Silvanus N-GMS	4771 [e] hymin ὕμιν to you PPro-D2P	3588 [e] tou τοῦ the Art-GMS	4103 [e] pistou πιστου faithful Adj-GMS	80 [e] adelphou ἀδελφου brother N-GMS	5613 [e] hos ὡς as Adv	3049 [e] logizomai λογίζομαι , I regard [him] V-PIM/P-1S	1223 [e] di' δι' through Prep	3641 [e] oligon ὀλίγων few [words] Adj-GMP
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1125 [e] egrapsa ἐγραψα V-AIA-1S	3870 [e] parakalon παρακαλῶν V-PPA-NMS	2532 [e] kai καί and Conj	1957 [e] epimartyron ἐπιμαρτυρῶν testifying V-PPA-NMS	3778 [e] tauten ταύτην this DPro-AFS	1510 [e] einai εἶναι to be V-PNA	227 [e] alēthē ἀληθῆ [the] true Adj-AFS	5485 [e] charin χάριν grace N-AFS	3588 [e] tou τοῦ of God Art-GMS	2316 [e] Theou Θεοῦ , N-GMS	1519 [e] eis εἰς in Prep
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3739 [e] hen ἣν which RelPro-AFS	2476 [e] stēte στῆτε . you stand V-AMA-2P
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Verb - Aorist Imperative Active - 2nd Person Plural

1 Peter 5_12 Singular or Plural.docx