# "What" and "Who" Questions

Beginning To Converse in Greek

A lesson for the *Paideia* web-app © Ian W. Scott, 2015



# Asking "What" and "Who" Questions

- We've already learned how to ask someone's name
  - So we've already seen how this works
- The interrogative pronoun
  - Pronoun
    - Stands in place of a nominal
  - Interrogative
    - For asking questions (interrogating)
- English has two interrogative pronouns
  - What?
  - Who?



# The Greek Interrogative Pronoun

- Greek has two forms as well
  - Depends on gender
  - Agrees with the nominal you're asking about

Τίς ὁ υίος;	บโος is masculine
Τί το παις;	παις is neuter
Τίς ή μητηρ;	μητηρ is feminine

Masc. and Fem. Neut.

τίς τί

nom.



- The accent is necessary
  - $\tau i \varsigma =$  "what?" "who?"
    - interrogative pronoun
  - τις = "something," "someone"
    - indefinite pronoun
- Typing tip
  - Typed with a "dead key" like breathing marks
    - Usually the ";" key (try with or without SHIFT)



nom.

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
; & I & = i \\
\text{OR} & & \\
; & + \text{Shift} & I & = i
\end{array}$$

- Either form can mean "what?" or "which?"
  - Inanimate objects have gender in Greek

Τίς ὁ σου οἰκος;	Which is your house?
Τίς συναγωγη;	What is a synagogue?
Τί το γυμνασιον;	What is the gymnasium?
Τί το ὀνομα σου;	What is your name?



- Either form can mean "what?" or "which?"
- Either form can mean "who?"
  - Some words for people are neuter
  - Pronoun should agree with the nominal you're asking about

Τίς ή σου θυγατηρ;	Who is your sister?
Τίς ὁ πατηρ σου;	Who is your father?
Τί σου το τεκνον;	Who is your child?



- Either form can mean "what?" or "which?"
- Either form can mean "who?"
- But each has a default
  - Ti = "what?" (impersonal)
  - Tising = "who?" (personal)

Τίς ούτος;	Who is this?
Τί τουτο;	What is this?



### Word Order in Questions

- Interrogative pronoun can come anywhere in sentence
  - Always the predicate complement
  - Just not between article and its nominal

Τίς ὁ σου ἀδελφος;

'Ο άδελφος σου τίς;

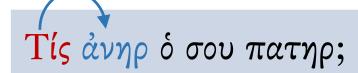
Σου τίς ὁ ἀδελφος;

Ὁ ἀδελφος τίς σου;



## Adjectival Use of TIΣ/TI

- Sometimes  $\tau i \varsigma / \tau i$  acts like an adjective
  - Modifies an explicit complement
  - Translated "which?"



Which man is your father?



## Keep Learning

- You can learn more about the interrogative pronoun and asking questions here:
  - Mounce, Basics of Biblical Greek
    - Interrogative pronoun, 10.11 (p. 81)



Mounce introduces all the case forms of  $\tau$ i $\zeta$  together, while we are starting with just the nominative. Don't worry yet about the other cases.

