

TITLE: “Jesus—God and Savior? Problematizing the Granville Sharp Rule in Titus 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:1”

INTRODUCTION

Several passages in the New Testament have been set forth by scholars as examples where it is claimed that the term *theos* (“God”) is applied to Jesus. Two scriptures that are often used on this account are Titus 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:1. In these passages, it is argued that the grammatical construction indicates that *theos* is being used in reference to Jesus. This determination is in large part (if not exclusively) formulated based on what is known as the “Granville Sharp Rule.”

In 1798, Granville Sharp published a volume entitled, *Remarks on the Uses of the Definitive Article in the Greek New Testament*.¹ Sharp admits that his investigation was prompted by a desire to correct what he perceived were some mistranslations in the Common English Version in order to substantiate the doctrine of the deity of Jesus Christ.

Between the years of 1798 and 1807, Sharp’s work would go through four editions, with the fourth being an American reprint of the third edition with some minor typological and spelling corrections. This paper will draw on the text from the 3rd edition published in England in 1803.² In his small treatise, Sharp set forth six “rules” of Greek grammar that he believed were valid in the New Testament and which then proved the deity of Christ in specific passages:

Rule #1—When two personal nouns of the same case are connected by the copulative καί, if the former has the definitive article, and the latter has not, they both relate to the same person.

Rule #2—If both nouns have the article, but not the copulative, they relate to the same person.

Rule #3—If the first has the article and the second has not, and there is no copulative, they also relate to the same person.

¹ The full title of Sharp’s volume is, *Remarks on the Uses of the Definitive Article in the Greek Text of the New Testament; Containing Many New Proofs of the Divinity of Christ, From Passages Which are Wrongly Translated in the Common English Version. By Granville Sharp, Esq. To Which is Added a Plain Matter-of-Fact Argument for the Divinity of Christ, by the Editor* (Durham; L. Pennington: 1798).

² Granville Sharp, *Remarks on the Uses of the Definitive Article in the Greek Text of the New Testament: Containing Many New Proofs of the Divinity of Christ, From Passages Which are Wrongly Translated in the Common English Version. To Which is Added an Appendix Containing I. A Table of Evidences of Christ’s Divinity, by Dr. Whitby. II. A Plain Argument from the Gospel History for the Divinity of Christ, by the Former Learned Editor [T. Burgess]. And Two Other Appendixes Added by the Author*, 3rd ed. (London: Vernor and Hood [etc.], 1803), 123.

Rule #4—If the nouns are not personal, they relate to different things or qualities.

Rule #5—If personal nouns of the same case are connected by the copulative, and the first has not the article, they relate to different persons.

Rule #6—If they are connected by the copulative, and both have the article, they relate also to different persons.

The bulk of Sharp's volume is dedicated to Rule #1 in relation to eight specific christologically³ significant texts (Acts 20:28; Eph 5:5; 2 Thess 1:12; 1 Tim 5:21; 2 Tim 4:1; Titus 2:13; 2 Peter 1:1; Jude 4). However, at least four of the eight passages that Sharp appealed to are based on dubious textual variants (Acts 20:28; 1 Tim 5:21; 2 Tim 4:1; Jude 4). Furthermore, both 1 Tim 5:21; 2 Tim 4:1; and Eph 5:5 have "Christ" (*Christos*) in the TSKS construction, where "Christ," essentially, is likely functioning as a proper noun in the NT epistles, and therefore, does not fit Sharp's criteria. Lastly, in 2 Thess 1:12 one would have to separate *kuriou* ("Lord") from its direct apposition to *Iēsou Christou* ("Jesus Christ") in order to maintain the TSKS construction without *Iēsou Christou* functioning as a proper noun as well.

This leaves Titus 2:13 and 2 Pet 1:1 as the remaining christologically significant texts in the NT for Sharp's rule to be considered. We will examine these more closely below.

In an effort to demonstrate the validity of rule #1, Sharp set forth twenty-five non-christologically significant passages as examples that supported the rule.⁴ These examples demonstrate the principle of TSKS where both substantives can be said to refer to the same person. To my knowledge, none of these examples are contested as not having a singular referent.

The objective of this paper is to: 1) demonstrate (at least in an initial manner) a number of the exceptions that have been levied against the Granville Sharp Rule, 2) to expose the great lengths to which some scholars will go in an effort to try and maintain the validity of Sharp's rule (or their version of it) so as to make its validity appear necessary in Titus 2:13 and 2 Pet 1:1, and 3) to offer an interpretation of Titus 2:13 and 2 Pet 1:1.

GRANVILLE SHARP RULE #1

According to Sharp, his first rule states:

³ A "christologically" significant text in the present context is one that, according to grammatical structure, is argued to affirm the deity of Christ by attributing the title *theos* to Jesus.

⁴ Matt 12:22; 2 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 11:31; Eph 6:21; Heb 3:1; 2 Pet 2:20; 3:2, 18; Phil 4:20; Rev 16:15; Col 2:2; 1 Thess 3:11; Jas 1:27; Rom 15:6; 1 Cor 15:24; Gal 1:4; Eph 5:20; Col 1:3, 12; 3:17; 1 Thess 1:3; 3:13; 2 Thess 2:16; Jas 3:9; Rev 1:6

“When the copulative καὶ connects two nouns of the same case [viz. nouns (either substantive or adjective, or participles) of personal description respecting office, dignity, affinity, or connection, and attributes properties, or qualities, good or ill,] if the article ὁ, or any of its cases, precedes the first of the said nouns or participles, and is not repeated before the second noun or participle, the latter always relates to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun or participle.”⁵

So confident was Sharp about his rule that he asserts, “There is no exception or instance of the like mode of expression, that I know of, which necessarily requires a construction different from what is here laid down, except the nouns be proper names, or in the plural number; in which case there are many exceptions; though there are not wanting examples, even of plural nouns, which are expressed exactly agreeable to this rule.”⁶

The construction that Sharp is describing has come to be known as a TSKS construction. The acronym is used as shorthand to refer to the components of the construction as indicated below.

T		S		K		S
ARTICLE	—	SUBSTANTIVE	—	KAI	—	SUBSTANTIVE

For illustrative purposes, two examples of Sharp’s TSKS construction can be seen in Eph 6:21 and Jas 3:9.

Eph 6:21

Tychikos ho agapētos adelphos kai pistos diakonos (Τύχικος ὁ ἀγαπητὸς ἀδελφὸς καὶ πιστὸς διάκονος)

“Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful servant”

T		S		K		S
<i>ho</i>	<i>agapētos</i>	<i>adelphos</i>	<i>kai</i>	<i>pistos</i>	<i>diakonos</i>	

Here both *adelphos* (“brother”) and *diakonos* (“servant”) are substantives that refer to “Tychicus.”

Jas 3:9

en autē eulougoumen ton kurion kai patera (ἐν αὐτῇ εὐλογοῦμεν τὸν κύριον καὶ πατέρα)
“with it we bless the Lord and Father”

T	S		K	S
<i>ton</i>	<i>kurion</i>	<i>kai</i>	<i>patera</i>	

⁵ Sharp, *Remarks on the Uses of the Definitive Article*, 3.

⁶ Ibid., 6.

Here both *kurion* (“Lord”) and *patera* (“Father”) are substantives that refer to “God.”

EXCEPTIONS TO SHARP’S RULE

One of the most outspoken critics of Sharp’s rule was Calvin Winstanley who published a response to Sharp’s volume entitled, *A Vindication of Certain Passages in the Common English Version of the New Testament Addressed to Granville Sharp*, first in 1805, and then a second edition in 1819.⁷ In his critique, Winstanley sets forth a series of instances from sources outside the New Testament (biblical and extrabiblical) that demonstrate exceptions to Sharp’s rule.

Some examples are:

1. From Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*:

peri has legomen ton sōphrona kai akolaston (περὶ ἃς λέγομεν τὸν σώφρονα καὶ ἀκόλαστον)⁸

“concerning which we call the disciplined and undisciplined (man)”

	T	S	K	S
<i>peri has legomen</i>	<i>ton</i>	<i>sōphrona</i>	<i>kai</i>	<i>akolaston</i>

2. From the Septuagint (LXX):

phobou ton theon huie kai basilea kai mētheterō autōn apeithēsēs (φοβοῦ τὸν θεόν, υἱέ, καὶ βασιλέα καὶ μηθετέρῳ αὐτῶν ἀπειθήσης)⁹

“My son, fear God and the king, and disobey neither of them”

T	S		K	S
<i>ton</i>	<i>theon</i>	<i>huie</i>	<i>kai</i>	<i>basilea</i>

3. From Herodotus’ *Histories*:

⁷ The full title of Winstanley’s work is, Calvin Winstanley, *A Vindication of Certain Passages in the Common English Version of the New Testament: Addressed to Granville Sharp, Esq., Author of "Remarks on the Uses of the Definitive Article in the Greek Text of the New Testament"*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: University Press—Hilliard and Metcalf, 1819).

⁸ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1148a

⁹ Alfred Ralfs, ed., *Septuaginta* (Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 2006)

ton oinochoon kai mageiron kai hippokomon kai diēkonon kai angeliēphronon (τὸν οἰνοχόον καὶ μάγειρον καὶ ἵπποκόμον καὶ διήκονον καὶ ἀγγελιῆφόρον)¹⁰
 “the cupbearer and cook and groom and servant and messenger”

T	S		K	S		K	S		K	S		K	S
<i>ton</i>	<i>oinochoon</i>		<i>kai</i>	<i>mageiron</i>		<i>kai</i>	<i>hippokomon</i>		<i>kai</i>	<i>diēkonon</i>		<i>καὶ</i>	<i>ἀγγελιῆφόρον</i>

4. From Strabo’s *Geography*:

cheirista d’ ho tetartos kai hebdomos kai ho hustatos ho Aulētēs (χείριστα δ’ ὁ τέταρτος καὶ ὁ ἑβδομος καὶ ὁ ὕστατος ὁ Αὐλητής)¹¹
 “but the fourth and seventh [kings] were the worst, along with the last one, Auletes”

T	S		K	S
<i>ho</i>	<i>tetartos</i>		<i>kai</i>	<i>hebdomos</i>

5. From *The Martyrdom of Polycarp*:

hō hē doxa sun tō patri kai hagiō pneumatī (ὥ ἡ δόξα σὺν τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι)¹²
 “to whom be glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit”

T	S		K	S
<i>tō</i>	<i>patri</i>		<i>kai</i>	<i>hagiō pneumatī</i>

6. From an anonymous writer in the Oxyrhynchus Papyrus collection:

tō patri kai tini daneistē (τῷ πατρὶ καὶ τινὶ δανειστῇ)¹³
 “to the father and a certain money-lender”

T	S		K	S
<i>tō</i>	<i>patri</i>		<i>kai</i>	<i>tini daneistē</i>

To these examples of exceptions to Sharp’s Rule, a number of others can also be added. Each of the examples above satisfies Sharp’s grammatical construction (TSKS) but fails to

¹⁰ Herodotus, *Histories*, 4.71

¹¹ Strabo, *Geography*, 17.1.11

¹² *The Martyrdom of Polycarp*, 22.3

¹³ P. Oxy 486.6

agree with his deduction about the TSKS construction, i.e., that the two substantives *must* refer to the same person.

In recent decades, a number of scholars have sought to bolster Sharp's rule in an attempt to maintain its validity in the face of certain exceptions, but none have invested as much effort as Daniel Wallace, professor of New Testament at Dallas Theological Seminary.

DANIEL WALLACE'S "MODIFIED GRANVILLE SHARP RULE"

In a full-length monograph, slightly modified from his PhD dissertation entitled, *Granville Sharp's Canon and Its Kin: Semantics and Significance*,¹⁴ Wallace has gone to great lengths to try and remove weaknesses and shortcomings in Sharp's rule and strive to prove conclusively that it is valid throughout the New Testament without exception.

Wallace interacts with Winstanley's objections by organizing them according to "classes." He also adds two additional classes of his own to the list, totaling *six* distinct classes of exceptions. These six "classes" of exceptions correspond to the examples listed in the previous section. Thus, I will briefly give a summary of Wallace's response to these exceptions.

For class #1, Wallace says that they can be described as containing "generic" substantives, and that even though the examples with generic substantives violates Sharp's rule, he advocates that they are "plural *semantically*" and therefore are "not within the purview of the rule," because "Sharp's rule applies only to nouns that have an *individual* referent, as opposed to a class or group."¹⁵

And so, Wallace proposes to modify Sharp's rule to apply only to substantives that are singular, both grammatically and semantically. Thereby excluding all the exceptions to Sharp's rule that fall into this category.

For class #2 (of which there is only one clear example), Wallace describes it as "translation" Greek, and after offering four potential solutions to why Prov 24:21 violates Sharp's rule, he reluctantly admits that it "stands out as an exceptional sample in the LXX. It may be considered as something of an anomaly, not representative of the idiom of koine Greek."¹⁶

And thus, Wallace again stipulates that a slight adjustment can be made to Sharp's rule by saying that "rarely (possibly once—so far) translation Greek will violate the rule, if the base language has a contrary construction."¹⁷

¹⁴ Daniel B. Wallace, *Granville Sharp's Canon and Its Kin: Semantics and Significance* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 123.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 126.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 127.

For class #3, they can be described as containing “enumerated” substantives, and Wallace says that “when TSKS fits the rule, the second substantive either further identifies or describes or clarifies something about the first. If so, then typically a *third* epithet would be superfluous.”¹⁸ One clear NT example of this is Luke 6:47, but Wallace negates it as a violation of the rule because he claims that the triple “substantival participles semantically function in a conditional way for the generic group in view.”¹⁹ And therefore, Wallace again proposes to modify Sharp’s rule by saying that “where *several* nouns are involved in the construction it may or may not follow the rule.”²⁰

For class #4, involves Patristic writers who use the TSKS construction in a way that violates Sharp’s rule. Most of these examples involve the Patristic writers using a single article to govern titles of God, and according to Sharp’s rule, they would be attributing terms like “Father” and “Son” to the same person (i.e., referent). Wallace admits that these examples are valid TSKS constructions but defends Sharp’s rule as still being valid by explaining that the Patristic writers used the TSKS as a grammatical shorthand to indicate the “Father” and “Son” are “identical in their *being*,” but not the same “person.”²¹

For class #5, they can be described as containing “ordinal” substantives (e.g., numerals), and Wallace says that “ordinal numbers do seem to constitute a special class” as they “do not function like the usual common epithet” and “function very much like proper names and therefore tend to move in semantic circles outside the ambit of Sharp’s requirements.”²²

In light of this, Wallace suggests that Sharp’s rule still holds since ordinal numbers can be lumped in with proper nouns and thereby are excluded from the criteria for Sharp’s rule.

Lastly, for class #6, they can be described as containing an inferred “indefinite article.” Technically speaking, the “indefinite article” is an indefinite pronoun that Wallace asserts is functioning “like an indefinite article” and claims that the TSKS construction is broken since there is grammatically an inferred “article” (even though Greek lacks an indefinite article).²³

Given all these exceptions and the necessary modifications to Sharp’s rule that are apparently necessary in order for the rule to still be valid, Wallace has proposed a “Modified Granville Sharp Rule” that can be described as follows:

“In native Greek constructions (i.e., not translation Greek), when a single article modifies *two* substantives connected by *καί* (thus, article-substantive-*καί*-substantive), when both substantives are (1) singular (both grammatically and

¹⁸ Ibid. Emphasis original.

¹⁹ Ibid., 128 n. 86.

²⁰ Ibid., 128. Emphasis original.

²¹ Ibid., 270. Emphasis original.

²² Ibid., 130.

²³ Ibid., 131.

semantically), (2) personal, (3) and common nouns (not proper names or ordinals), they have the same referent. This rule, as stated, covers *all* the so-called exceptions.”²⁴

Next, we will examine the two remaining NT passages that are christologically significant and where, Wallace argues, Sharp’s rule is, indeed, valid. Both passages satisfy the grammatical constraints of Sharp’s original rule and Wallace’s modified rule.

TITUS 2:13

Titus 2:13

προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

“...awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and Savior of us Jesus Christ”

The phrase *tēs doxēs tou megalou theou kai sōtēros hēmōn Iēsou Christou* (τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) fits the TSKS construction as shown below:

	T		S		K		S	
<i>tēs doxēs</i>	<i>tou</i>	<i>megalous</i>	<i>theou</i>	<i>kai</i>	<i>sōtēros</i>	<i>hēmōn</i>	<i>Iēsou Christou</i>	

Sharp and Wallace would contend that according to the TSKS construction and rule #1 that *tou theou kai sōtēros* is modifying *Iēsou Christou*, and thus, the phrase can be rendered as “the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ, our great God and Savior.” It is not disputed that the grammar matches other patterns in the NT and wider extrabiblical Greek usage where the TSKS construction is employed in order to refer to a single person. Rather, the pertinent question is whether Sharp’s rule is *absolute* and without the possibility of exception.

This is what Wallace would have us believe according to his investigation: Sharp’s rule is “an absolute principle of NT grammar.”²⁵ However, the consensus among NT grammarians is not so convincing.

As two of the best New Testament Greek scholars of the past century James Moulton and Nigel Turner argue against the conclusiveness of the Granville Sharp Rule:

“One must look critically at the common view that in Ti 2:13 we have two clauses in apposition: τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ [sc. τοῦ] σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰ.Χ. The same is true of 2 Pt 1:1 τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ [sc. τοῦ] Ἰ.Χ. (S κυρίου for θεοῦ). In Hell., and indeed for

²⁴ Ibid., 132. Emphasis original.

²⁵ Ibid., 233.

practical purposes in class[ical] Greek the repetition of the art[icle] was not strictly necessary to ensure that the items be considered separately.”²⁶

And the standard NT Greek lexicon BDAG also claims that in Titus 2:13 the TSKS construction suggests a “different semantic aspect,” calling into question the legitimacy of the universality of Sharp’s rule.

“ὁ μέγας θεὸς καὶ σ. ἡμῶν Χρ. Ἰ. *our great God and Savior Christ Jesus* Tit 2:13 (cp. PLond III, 604b, 118 p. 80 [47 AD] τῷ μεγάλῳ θεῷ σωτῆρι; but the presence of καὶ Tit 2:13 suggests a diff. semantic aspect and may justify the rendering in NRSV mg).”²⁷ The margin note in the NRSV reads, “of the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ.”

Furthermore, in the highly respected standard grammar on NT Greek, Blass, Debrunner, and Funk have this brief caveat to say about the TSKS construction in Titus 2:13:

“The article is (naturally) omitted with the second of two phrases in apposition connected by καί.”²⁸

And finally, eminent New Testament scholar Ezra Abbot offers another word of caution when considering the absoluteness of Sharp’s rule:

“In the case before us [Tit 2:13], the omission of the article before σωτῆρος [*so-te'ros*] seems to me to present no difficulty,—not because σωτῆρος is made sufficiently definite by the addition of ἡμῶν [*he-mon'*] (Winer), for, since God as well as Christ is often called “our Saviour,” ἡ δόξα τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν [*he do'xa tou me-ga'lou The-ou' kai so-te'ros he-mon'*], *standing alone*, would most naturally be understood of one subject, namely, God, the Father; but the addition of Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν [*I-e-sou' Khri-stou' to so-te'ros he-mon'*] changes the case entirely, restricting the σωτῆρος ἡμῶν to a person or being who, according to Paul’s *habitual use of language*, is distinguished from the person or being whom he designates as ὁ θεός [*ho The-os'*], so that there was no need of the repetition of the article to prevent ambiguity. So in 2 Thess. i. 12, the expression κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου [*ka-ta' ten kha'rin tou The-ou' he-mon' kai ky-ri'ou*] would naturally be understood of one subject, and the article would be required before κυρίου if two were intended; but the simple addition of Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου [*I-e-sou' Khri-stou' to ky-ri'ou*] makes the reference to the two distinct subjects clear without the insertion of the article.”²⁹

²⁶ James H. Moulton and Nigel Turner, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek: Syntax*, vol. 3 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1964), 181.

²⁷ BDAG, s.v. σωτήρ

²⁸ Friedrich Blass, Albert Debrunner, and Robert W. Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1961), §276.

²⁹ Ezra Abbot, *The Authorship of the Fourth Gospel, and Other Critical Essays: Selected from the Published Papers of the Late Ezra Abbot* (Boston: Geo. H. Ellis, 1888), 452.

Therefore, to see a separation of referents between *megalou theou* and *sōtēros hēmōn Iēsou Christou* is not seen as a deviation from Greek grammar. While it might be a deviation from the majority pattern of TSKS constructions, it is not out of the question as a possibility that the context and syntax of Titus 2:13 is denoting two individuals: “the great God” and “our Savior Jesus Christ.”

However, even if one remains convinced of the applicability of Sharp’s rule in Titus 2:13, it doesn’t automatically lead to the conclusion that *theou kai sōtēros* (“God and Savior”) is indisputably being applied to Jesus Christ. The grammar of the TSKS construction can actually be construed in two different ways. There is one, which follows Sharp’s rule, where *theou* and *sōtēros* are taken together and applied to *Iēsou Christou* (“Jesus Christ”), but there is an entirely different way to understand the syntax where *Iēsou Christou* stands in apposition to *doxēs* (“glory”) instead of *theou kai sōtēros*.

Understanding the syntax in this way would result in a translation as such: “the appearing of our great God and Savior’s glory—Jesus Christ” or perhaps more nuanced as, “the appearing of Jesus Christ—the glory of our great God and Savior.” Several NT scholars have favored this reading and have argued for its preference over alternative ways of rendering the syntax.³⁰

2 PETER 1:1

2 Peter 1:1

Συμεὼν Πέτρος δοῦλος καὶ ἀπόστολος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῖς ἰσότημιον ἡμῖν λαχοῦσιν
πίστιν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

“Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who received the equal-value-with-us faith through the righteousness of the God of us and Savior Jesus Christ”

The phrase *tou theou hēmōn kai sōtēros Iēsou Christou* (τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) fits the TSKS construction as shown below:

T	S		K	S	
<i>tou</i>	<i>theou</i>	<i>hēmōn</i>	<i>kai</i>	<i>sōtēros</i>	<i>Iēsou Christou</i>

It can be noted that in 2 Peter, several TSKS constructions appear, specifically with “Jesus Christ” in the construction: 1:1, 11; 2:20; 3:18.

³⁰ Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, New International Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 752-54. Gordon D. Fee, *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2007), 442-46. Originally proposed by Fenton J. A. Hort, *The Epistle of St. James* (London: Macmillan, 1909), 103-4.

It has been argued by some scholars that because the possessive pronoun appears following the first substantive *theou* (“God”) that it segments it off from the second substantive *sōtēros* (“Savior”).³¹ The major issue with this line of reasoning is that the exact same syntax appears in 1:11 and 3:18 with *tou kuriou hēmōn sōtēros Iēsou Christou* (“our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”) where clearly a singular referent is meant: Jesus Christ. It would be difficult to substantiate based on a grammatical syntax alone that a distinction should be made between *theou* (“God”) and *sōtēros* (“Savior”) in 1:1.

Nevertheless, breaking this grammatical pattern is exactly what the standard NT Greek grammar by Blass, Debrunner, and Funk suggests under the section titled, “The Article with Two or More Substantives Connected by καί.” Regarding the Greek construction in 2 Pet 1:1, it says, “However σωτήρ ἡμ. Ἰ. Χρ. may be taken by itself and separated from the preceding (cf. §268(2) for the omission of the art. elsewhere).”³² In essence, BDF is claiming that in 2 Pet 1:1 the option exists grammatically (according to them) to separate *sōtēros* from *theou*.

That may be possible, but grammatically, it doesn’t sit on very solid reasoning. A better argument for seeing a distinction between *theou* and *sōtēros* can be gathered from the immediate context. Primarily from the flow of thought in 1:1-2 where v. 2 makes it more evident that two individuals are meant, “in the knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord” (*en epignōsei tou theou kai Iēsou tou kuriou hēmōn*, ἐν ἐπιγνώσει τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν). The substantive *theou* is clearly marked off as separate from *Iēsou* which is now modified by *kuriou* (“Lord”) instead of *sōtēros* (“Savior”) as in v. 1. For the substantive *theou* to have one referent in v. 1 and then a different referent in v. 2 without any additional qualifier (e.g., *patera*, “the Father”) is a very quick switch, but probably not out of the realm of possibility.

Lastly, if one is again convinced by the TSKS construction, and they believe Sharp’s rule is in effect in v. 1, then it is also perhaps possible that the term *theou* is being applied to Jesus in a diminished sense, which was common in the Greco-Roman culture for individuals who people thought were endowed with divine powers or authority (e.g., miracle workers, the emperor, etc).³³ But having the title *theos* applied to the resurrected Jesus Christ in a diminished sense does not imply that Jesus is “the God” (i.e., YHWH) any more than Jesus carrying the title of *kurios* (“Lord”) also suggest that he is “the Lord” (i.e., YHWH). While a narrative analysis of the NT will show a large overlap in usage with *kurios* between God and Jesus Christ, the same analysis will turn up drastically different results with regard to

³¹ Georg B. Winer, *A Treatise on the Grammar of New Testament Greek: Regarded as the Basis of New Testament Exegesis*, ed. 3rd (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1882), 162.

³² Blass, Debrunner, and Funk, *A Greek Grammar*, §276.

³³ The terms *theos sōtēr* (“God Savior”) was a common epithet in the first-century but was almost never used with a copulative (καί); this is also especially true in the LXX. See Conrad H. Moehlman, *The Combination Theos Soter as Explanation of the Primitive Christian Use of Soter as Title and Name of Jesus* (Rochester: Du Bois Press, 1920).

theos. *Theos* is a term that is rarely used in the NT with respect to Jesus (and some might even argue that it never is).

CONCLUSION

Several preliminary exceptions have been present to the Granville Sharp Rule, both within biblical and extrabiblical literature outside the New Testament, as well as Christian and secular. In addition, the numerous adaptations and modifications that Daniel Wallace has made in an effort to remove the significance of the exceptions presented in violation of Sharp's rule were recounted along with defining his "modified" Granville Sharp Rule. Lastly, Titus 2:13 and 2 Pet 1:1 were examined with respect to Sharp's rule and the reasons for its possible application or exception and the implications that each conclusion holds.

When the cumulative grammatical data is assessed, it appears that Sharp's Rule (incl. Wallace's Modified Sharp's Rule) is the predominant pattern that is observed both inside and outside the NT. To my knowledge, no one contests this fact. But also, there have been considerable exceptions demonstrated that exist within biblical and extrabiblical literature that do not conform to Sharp's rule.

If one is persuaded that the syntax of Titus 2:13 should be rendered such that the translation places "Jesus Christ" in apposition to "glory" and thus the terms "our great God and Savior" are in reference to the Father, then all we are left to consider is 2 Pet 1:1. If the NT had more than a single unambiguous example of a TSKS construction³⁴ where *theos* ("God") was used in reference to Jesus Christ. The grammatical case of Sharp's TSKS might be more convincing. But the contextual data does not seamlessly flow with the grammatical data. They are, in a sense, at odds with each other.

As Calvin Winstanley, Sharp's most ardent opponent advised,

"If the sacred writers have expressed themselves ambiguously in some instances, and on the same subject clearly in others, and still more in a great plurality of others, we are bound, in exclusion of every extraneous authority, to consult them as their own best interpreters."³⁵

And thus, to conclude I don't know of better words that relate to this issue than those that have been said by the German classical Alexander Buttman. They are both wise and honest, and all students of Scripture should listen well:

"It will probably never be possible, either in reference to profane literature or to the N. T., to bring down to rigid rules which have no exception, the inquiry when with several substantives connected by conjunctions the article is repeated, and when it

³⁴ Based on the premise that 2 Thess 1:12 does not qualify as "unambiguous."

³⁵ Winstanley, *A Vindication of Certain Passages*, 2.

is not...From this fact alone it follows, that in view of the subjective and arbitrary treatment of the article on the part of individual writers...it is very hazardous in particular cases to draw important inferences affecting the sense or even of a doctrinal nature, from the single circumstance of the use or omission of the article; see e. g. Tit. ii. 13; Jude 4; Pet. i. 1; and the expositors of these passages."³⁶

³⁶ Alexander Buttmann, *Gram. of N. T. Greek*, §125, 14; p. 97 (Thayer's trans.). Quoted in Ezra Abbot, "On the Construction of Titus ii.13," *Journal of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis* 1, no. 1 (1881): 16.

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