



"Meditate
upon these things;
give thyself
wholly to them;
that thy profiting
may appear unto all"

I Timothy 4:15

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THE GREEK ARTICLE
AND THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST'S DEITY

(Part II)

It has been said that each generation of Christians ought to rewrite its creeds. The intention surely is not that we ought literally to throw out those confessions which our believing fathers have formulated from Holy Scripture, and which have demonstrated their worth in instructing Christians in sound doctrine and in refuting those who oppose it. But we must "rewrite" our creeds in this sense, that we in our generation become convinced directly from the Bible that what we confess is in fact the pure truth of God's Word. Only when our faith rests solidly upon Scripture itself will it be safe from the temptations of Satan, who never ceases to tempt mankind with his subtle "Yea, hath God said?" (Gen. 3:1)

The doctrine of Christ's deity has been a special target of Satan throughout the generations. In the ancient period of church history we find the Monarchians and the Arians, who sought to reduce the mystery of the Trinity to the level of human reason by "confounding the Persons" of the Trinity on the one hand, or by "dividing the Substance" of these Persons on the other. (*Athanasian Creed*) In the modern period, we find sects such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, and a goodly number of rationalists in various Christian denominations as well, who continue to deceive many with their reintroductions of the ancient heresies.

And we have so much to lose if our confidence in the person of Jesus Christ as "true God, begotten of the Father from eternity" is shaken. Our sin is so deep and deadly a thing, that redemption could not be obtained by one who was merely human. "No man can by any means redeem his brother, Or give to God a ransom for him -- For the redemption of his soul is costly." (Ps. 49:7f., *NASB*) But now Scripture assures us that our Redeemer was equal to the task of delivering us from the death-verdict of the Law, for the blood of His own sacrifice which He brought into the holy of holies of heaven was the precious and availing blood of One who is in truth "the great and mighty God." (Tit. 2:13; Is. 9:6)

The present series of articles in the *Journal of*

Theology is dedicated to a Scriptural defense of the doctrine of Christ's deity. This study is focusing particularly on several passages in which the presence or absence of the Greek definite article is a significant factor in the exegesis, and in which a correct understanding of the syntax of the article is crucial if we are to arrive at the meaning intended by the Holy Spirit. In the September, 1973, issue (pp. 12-28), I presented at some length a principle of Greek grammar discovered in the latter part of the eighteenth century by an English philanthropist and philologist, Granville Sharp. It was Sharp's contention that a failure to recognize this principle had deprived many people of several significant proof passages for Christ's deity, particularly through weak or faulty translations in the *King James Version* of the Bible.

Among the passages cited by Sharp are the following verses, the readings of which are so well attested in the manuscripts that we can profitably study them in connection with his rule of syntax. I am citing them first from the *KJV*, underscoring those words which are significant to our study:

Ephesians 5:5. "For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

2 Thessalonians 1:12. "That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Timothy 5:21. "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality."

Titus 2:13. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

2 Peter 1:1. "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

It will be noted that in each of these verses the translators used a wording in English which would suggest that the term "God" is not to be applied to Jesus Christ, but rather to the person of the Father. It was Sharp's con-

tention that, according to a correct understanding of the syntax of the Greek article, the term "God" would have to be understood of Christ, and he therefore proposed the following alternate translations for the words underscored above:

Ephesians 5:5: "of the Christ and God," or "of (Jesus) the Christ and God," or "of Christ, (even) of God"

2 Thessalonians 1:12: "of the God and Lord of us, Jesus Christ," or "of Jesus Christ, our God and Lord"

1 Timothy 5:21: "Jesus Christ, the God and Lord"

Titus 2:13: "of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ"

2 Peter 1:1: "of our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ," or "of Jesus Christ, our God and Saviour"

Sharp recognized the important variant reading in the Timothy passage, and he was willing to accept this variant in the following sense: "the God and Christ, Jesus," or "Jesus, the God and Christ."

It must be stated quite frankly that not all Greek scholars since the time of Sharp have been willing to accept his principle, and we therefore find numerous grammars and commentaries which do not recognize these verses as proof passages for Christ's deity. Even our Lutheran dogmaticians have seemed somewhat reluctant to use them in their discussions of the divine nature of Christ, no doubt because of the cloud of uncertainty which has surrounded the exegesis of these passages. If, now, Sharp's principle can be defended as correct, we would have several additional passages -- and significant ones at that -- which we could use in our defense of the truth and our refutation of error in the matter of Christ's deity.

It seemed to me, therefore, that an evaluation of Sharp's conclusions would be a useful and important endeavor, and I have consequently examined his principle in the light of the entire body of New Testament writings, using for convenience one of the modern critical editions of the Greek Testament, the 20th edition of Nestle's *Novum Testamentum Graece* (1950). The results of this study appear on the pages which follow. All citations in the Greek are from this text of Nestle. For the sake of readers who are unfamiliar with the Greek, English translations are uniformly given. Unless otherwise in-

licated, these translations are from the *New American Standard Bible*, which itself has followed the text of a later edition of Nestle.

A Restatement of Sharp's Rule

It is time to restate that principle of Greek syntax which has come to be known as the canon or rule of Granville Sharp, or simply "Sharp's Rule."

When two personal nouns of the same case are connected by the copulative καί ["and"], if the former has the definite article, and the latter has not, they both relate to the same person.

It is essential to note the general syntactic form covered by the rule: definite article + personal noun + καί + personal noun. It is important, also, to understand what Sharp means by a "personal noun," which he carefully distinguishes from a proper name. According to his definition, personal nouns are nouns which are descriptive of personal relations, qualities, offices, ranks, and such like. The term would thus include such titles of office so significant to our study as "God," "Lord," "Savior," and even "Christ," but it would not include proper names like "John," "Paul," or "Jesus." This distinction between personal nouns and proper names becomes clearer if we note how they differ in actual usage. Proper names are seldom if ever used in the plural number, but personal nouns are commonly so used. Compare the following examples of plural personal nouns from the New Testament itself: "For false christs and false prophets will arise" (Matt. 24:24); "there are many gods and many lords" (1 Cor. 8:5). Furthermore, in English usage we generally do not use a definite article with proper names, while we often do so with personal nouns. For example, we would not say: "That man is the Jesus" -- "Jesus" functioning as a proper name. But we could say: "That man is the Christ" -- "Christ" being a personal noun, a title denoting an office.

Sharp, now, affirmed that his rule applied uniformly to personal nouns when they were used in the singular number, and of course when they occurred in the general form: definite article + personal noun + καί + personal noun. He specifically excluded plural personal nouns and proper names from the rule. I have, however, not restricted this study to singular personal nouns. In order

to test out his distinction between personal nouns and proper names, and to verify his exclusion of plural personal nouns and proper names from his rule, I am treating separately all three of these broad groupings: personal nouns in the plural, proper names, and personal nouns in the singular.

Before proceeding, it should be noted also that Sharp uses the term "nouns" in the broad sense of the word, so as to include substantives (nouns proper), and also adjectives and participles when they are used as substantives. Further information concerning the life or the rule of Granville Sharp can be found in the first article of this series.

Personal Nouns in the Plural

Sharp rightly recognized that his rule did not apply uniformly to passages which contained personal nouns in the plural. In tracing his rule through the New Testament, I found sixty verses which contained phrases of this general form: definite article + personal noun + καί + personal noun, where both nouns were in the plural number. Of these, in twenty-three cases (38%) the two nouns seemed to refer to the same group of people -- and were thus in a sense illustrations of Sharp's Rule. In thirty cases (50%) the two nouns appeared to refer to different groups of people -- the exceptions which led Sharp to exclude plural nouns from his rule. In the remaining seven cases (12%) it was not so readily apparent whether the pair of nouns referred to the same group of people or to different groups. Illustrations of these three categories follow.

Both nouns of the pair refer to the same group. The first example in the New Testament occurs in Matt. 5:6: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness" (οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες). In Matt. 11:28 Christ invites: "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy laden" (οἱ κοπιῶντες καὶ πεφορτισμένοι). In connection with the story of Palm Sunday we read in Matt. 21:15 of "the children who were crying out in the temple and saying, 'Hosanna to the Son of David'" (τοὺς κράζοντας ... καὶ λέγοντας). In Mark 12:40 Christ portrays the scribes as those "who devour widows' houses, and for appearance's sake offer long prayers" (οἱ κατέδοντες ... καὶ ... προσευχόμενοι).

The Gospel of Luke provides more examples in this category than any other book of the New Testament. There is Luke 6:35, in which Christ seems to be speaking of a single class, namely, the unbelievers: "He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men" (τοὺς ἀχαρίστους καὶ πονηροὺς). In Luke 8:21 the Lord refers to those "who hear the word of God and do it" (οἱ ... ἀκούοντες καὶ ποιῶντες). Luke 11:28 is similar: "Blessed are those who hear the word of God, and observe it" (οἱ ἀκούοντες... καὶ φυλάσσοντες). In Luke 12:4 Christ tells His disciples: "And I say to you my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do" (τῶν ἀποκτεννόντων ... καὶ ... ἐχόντων). In 20:46 He again refers to the scribes, here as those "who like to walk around in long robes, and love respectful greetings" (τῶν θελόντων ... καὶ φιλοῦντων).

Four examples are found in John: 1:40: "One of the two who heard John speak and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother" (τῶν ἀκουσάντων ... καὶ ἀκολουθησάντων); 11:31: "The Jews then who were with her in the house, and consoling her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her" (οἱ ὄντες ... καὶ παραμυθούμενοι); 11:45: "Many therefore of the Jews, who had come to Mary and beheld what He had done, believed in Him" (οἱ ἐλθόντες ... καὶ θεασάμενοι); and 20:29: "Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed" (οἱ ... ἰδόντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες).

Paul's writings exhibit six examples where both nouns in each pair seem to refer to the same group of people. Gal. 1:7: "There are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Christ" (οἱ ταρασσόντες ... καὶ θέλοντες). Eph. 1:1: "to the saints who are at Ephesus, and who are faithful in Christ Jesus" (τοῖς ἁγίοις ... καὶ πιστοῖς). Phil. 3:3: "We are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh" (οἱ ... λατρεύοντες καὶ καυχώμενοι ... καὶ ... πεποιθότες). 1 Tim. 4:3: "those who believe and know the truth" (τοῖς πιστοῖς καὶ ἐπεγνωκόσι). 2 Tim. 3:6: "those who enter into households and captivate weak women" (οἱ ἐνδύνοντες ... καὶ αἰχμαλωτίζοντες). Titus 1:15 likewise seems to be referring to a single group of people: "those who are defiled and unbelieving" (τοῖς ... μεμιασμένοις καὶ ἀπίστοις).

One example is found in the remaining epistles of

the New Testament, 1 Pet. 2:18: "Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable" (τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς καὶ ἐπιεικέσιν). The final three occur in the Revelation: 1:3: "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it" (οἱ ἀκούοντες ... καὶ τηροῦντες); 12:17: "who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus" (τῶν τηρούντων ... καὶ ἔχόντων); and 18:9: "And the kings of the earth, who committed acts of immorality and lived sensuously with her, will weep and lament" (οἱ ... πορνεύσαντες καὶ στρογνιδίσαντες).

The two nouns of the pair refer to different groups.

Most examples of personal nouns in the plural, again arranged in the form: definite article + personal noun + καὶ + personal noun, are found in this second category. And in the large majority of these, the nouns denote members of the various Jewish sects or ecclesiastical offices. The first such example occurs in Matt. 2:4, where it is said of Herod: "And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he began to inquire of them where the Christ was to be born" (τοῖς ἀρχιερεῦσι καὶ γραμματέσι). Compare also Matt. 3:7, 5:20, 12:38, 16:1, 16:6, 16:11, 16:12, 16:21 (three nouns: "the elders and chief priests and scribes"), 20:18, 26:47, 27:3, 27:12, 27:41; Mark 15:1; Luke 9:22 (three nouns), 14:3, 22:4; John 7:45; and Acts 23:7.

Four times in the Gospels we find the phrase "the publicans and sinners" (τῶν τελωνῶν καὶ ἁμαρτωλῶν), which groups again are not identical. Compare Matt. 9:11; Mark 2:16 (twice); and Luke 5:30. Twice in Acts, 15:2 and 16:4, the ministers of the Jerusalem congregation are referred to as "the apostles and elders" (τοῖς ἀποστόλοις καὶ πρεσβυτέροις, and τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων). From Acts 15:4, 6, 22, and 23, where articles are found before each of the nouns, we learn that the apostles and elders at Jerusalem were distinct groups.

Several examples remain. Matt. 21:12: "those who were buying and selling in the temple" (τοῖς πωλοῦντας καὶ ἀγοράζοντας); Luke 14:21: "Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame" (τοῖς πτωχοῖς καὶ ἀναπηροῖς καὶ τυφλοῖς καὶ χωλοῖς); 1 Tim. 5:8: "But if

any one does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith" (τῶν ἰδίων καὶ ... οἰκείων); and Rev. 21:8: "the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters" (τοὺς ... δειλοῦς καὶ ἀπίστοις καὶ ἐβδελυγμένοις καὶ φονεῦσιν καὶ πόρνοις καὶ φαρμακοῦς καὶ εἰδωλολάτραις).

Uncertain cases. Seven examples of personal nouns in the plural remain, and in each of these cases it is more difficult to determine whether the pair of nouns refers to one group of people or to two. In some of them the commentators themselves are not agreed, and I shall not take the time here to enter into an exegesis of them. A simple listing will have to suffice. Luke 15:9: "she calls together her friends and neighbors" (τὰς φίλας καὶ γείτονας). 1 Cor. 5:10: "the covetous and swindlers" (τοὺς πλεονέκταις καὶ ἄρπαξιν). Eph. 2:20: "having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν). Eph. 3:5: "it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit" (τοὺς ἁγίους ἀποστόλους ... καὶ προφήταις). Eph. 4:11: "He gave some ... as pastors and teachers" (τοὺς ... ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους). Heb. 5:2: "he can deal gently with the ignorant and misguided" (τοὺς ἀγνοοῦσιν καὶ πλανημένους). 2 Pet. 3:16: "which the untaught and unstable distort" (οἱ ἀμαθεῖς καὶ ἀστήρικτοι).

An added comment. In all sixty of the foregoing examples of personal nouns in the plural, an article is found only before the first noun of each pair or series. They were included in this study inasmuch as they have the general syntactic form described by Sharp's Rule: definite article + personal noun + καὶ + personal noun. We can clearly see that Sharp was correct in excluding plural personal nouns from his rule.

But there are many pairs or series of plural personal nouns in the New Testament where the identical article (the same number, gender, and case) is found before each of the nouns. Compare, for example, Matt. 21:15: "the chief priests and the scribes" (οἱ ἄρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς). Is there any significance in such a repetition of the article in a series of nouns? It would seem that there is. For the article retains in the New Testament some of its original demonstrative

force. The basic function of the article is to point out individual identity, to distinguish individuals from individuals, classes from classes, and qualities from qualities. When, therefore, an article is used with each noun in a series, the members of the series are thereby distinguished from each other. But when the article is used only before the first noun, the members of the series, even though they may not be identical, are for some reason treated by the writer as a single group. In Matt. 27:1 the apostle distinguishes "the chief priests and the elders" as two distinct classes, for he uses the article before each noun (οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι). But in verses 3 and 12 he treats them as if they were a single group, "the chief priests and elders" (τοῖς ἀρχιερεῦσιν καὶ πρεσβυτέροις, and τῶν ἀρχιερέων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων), since they are in fact acting as one in their designs to dispose of Jesus.

Proper Names

Sharp stipulated also that proper names were not to be included in his rule, for he rightly recognized that there would be exceptions. In my perusal of the Greek Testament I located a total of fourteen such exceptions. Compare the following: Matt. 17:1 and Mark 5:37: "Peter and James and John" (τὸν Πέτρον καὶ Ἰάκωβον καὶ Ἰωάννην); Luke 24:10: "Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James" (ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ Μαρία καὶ Ἰωάννα καὶ Μαρία ἡ Ἰακώβου); John 11:19: "to Martha and Mary" (πρὸς τὴν Μάρθαν καὶ Μαριάμ); Acts 4:13: "the confidence of Peter and John" (τὴν τοῦ Πέτρου παρρησίαν καὶ Ἰωάννου). In 2 Pet. 1:2, a personal noun with article is joined by καὶ to a proper name without article: "of God and of Jesus" (τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ Ἰησοῦ). The remaining examples are found at Mark 9:2, 15:47, 16:1; Acts 4:19, 13:2, 13:50, 15:22, and 16:30.

It will be noted that in all of the above the article is used before only the first term in a pair or series of proper names. But obviously the proper names in a given series do not all refer to the same individual. Sharp's Rule, therefore, does not apply -- as he himself recognized.

An added comment. We find in the New Testament a great variety in the use of the definite article with

proper names. There are passages in which no article at all is used, others in which the article is used before only the first of a series of names, and still others in which the same article is repeated before each name in the series. Compare the following passages where the names Paul and Silas are found: Acts 16:25: Παῦλος καὶ Σιλᾶς; Acts 16:30: τῷ Παύλῳ καὶ Σιλᾷ; and Acts 17:4: τῷ Παύλῳ καὶ τῷ Σιλᾷ. It would, it seems, be safe to make the following generalizations. Proper names, since they are in their nature particular rather than general, do not ordinarily require the article. When the article is used with them, it therefore probably retains much of its original demonstrative force. We find that John generally introduces a proper name without the article and thereafter uses it with that name. In such cases the article would have an anaphoric use, pointing back to an individual previously mentioned. When it is used before only the first name in a series, the individuals are probably treated as a single group, as in the fourteen examples cited above.

But it must be admitted that it is often difficult to state a reason for the presence or absence of articles with proper names. I do not believe that the usage of the holy writers in this area was random and meaningless, but the reasons for their usage may frequently elude us.

Personal Nouns in the Singular

We come finally to the passages which contain personal nouns in the singular, once again in the general form: definite article + personal noun + καὶ + personal noun. Sharp claimed that his rule applied uniformly to such passages, and I indeed could not find a single exception. Let us examine the evidence, which includes, apart from the verses bearing on Christ's deity, a total of eighty-nine examples.

Examples with participles. This category contains forty-eight of the total number (54%). The first example is found in the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. 7:26: "And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand" (ὁ ἀκούων ... καὶ ... ποιῶν). Mark 16:16 contains the following familiar illustration of the rule: "He who has believed and has been baptized shall

be saved" (ὁ πιστεύσας καὶ βαπτισθεὶς). In Luke 12:21 we read: "So is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God" (ὁ θησαυρίζων ... καὶ ... πλουτῶν). The Gospel of John contains more examples with participles than any other New Testament book. Compare John 6:54 and 6:56, which present identical clauses: "He who eats My flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life" (ὁ τρώγων ... καὶ πίνων). In his address to Cornelius, Acts 10:35, Peter says: "In every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right, is welcome to Him" (ὁ φοβούμενος ... καὶ ἐργαζόμενος). There are scattered examples throughout the epistles, such as this one in 1 Cor. 11:29: "For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he does not judge the body rightly" (ὁ ... ἐσθίων καὶ πίνων). Compare also 1 John 2:9: "The one who says he is in the light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now" (ὁ λέγων ... καὶ ... μισῶν). The Revelation contains four examples, including this one at 16:15: "Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments" (ὁ γρηγορῶν καὶ τηρῶν).

The remaining illustrations of Sharp's Rule which employ participles are found in Matt. 13:23; Mark 15:29; Luke 6:49, 12:47, 13:34; John 3:29, 5:24, 5:35, 6:33, 6:40, 6:45, 8:50, 9:8, 11:2, 11:26, 12:29, 12:48, 14:21; Acts 15:38; Rom. 2:3; 1 Cor. 16:16; 2 Cor. 1:21, 5:15, 5:18; Gal. 1:15, 2:20, 3:5; Eph. 2:14; 2 Thess. 2:4, 2:16; 1 Tim. 5:5 (a noun and a participle); 2 Tim. 1:9; Heb. 7:1; James 1:5; 1 Pet. 1:21; 2 John 9; Rev. 1:5, 3:7, and 22:8. All of the examples involving participles agree completely with the rule, in that in each of them both participles refer to the same individual.

Examples with adjectives. These number far less, only six (7%). I shall therefore cite them all. Acts 3:14: "But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One" (τὸν ἅγιον καὶ δίκαιον). Philemon 1 (an adjective and a noun): "to Philemon our beloved brother and fellow-worker" (τῷ ἀγαπητῷ καὶ συνεργῷ). 1 Pet. 4:18: "And if it is with difficulty that the righteous is saved, what will become of the godless man and the sinner?" (ὁ ... ἀσεβῆς καὶ ἁμαρτωλός). The NASB would have been closer to the Greek if it had translated the underscored phrase with only one article: "the godless man and sinner," for both the singular number of the verb (φανεῖται) and the

preceding context indicate that both adjectives refer to the same individual. Revelation 3:14: "the faithful and true witness" (ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστός καὶ ἀληθινός); 3:17: "You are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked" (ὁ ταλαίπωρος καὶ ἐλεεινός καὶ πτωχός καὶ τυφλός καὶ γυμνός); 6:10: "O Lord, holy and true" (ὁ ἅγιος καὶ ἀληθινός).

Once again it can be seen that Sharp's Rule agrees completely with the evidence.

Examples with substantives. The most significant examples, I believe, are those which employ substantives, or nouns proper. I found thirty-five of them (39% of the total), not including those which pertain to Christ's deity. The first in the New Testament is at Mark 6:3: "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon" (ὁ υἱός ... καὶ ἀδελφός). Compare also Mark 12:26: "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (ὁ θεός ... καὶ θεός ... καὶ θεός). An example similar to this is found in Luke 20:37.

The Apostle Paul is especially fond of this idiom. In Phil. 2:25 he refers to Epaphroditus as "my brother and fellow-worker and fellow-soldier" (τὸν ἀδελφὸν καὶ συνεργὸν καὶ συστρατιώτην). Similar expressions are used in Eph. 6:21, Col. 4:7, and 1 Thess. 3:2. In a number of passages Paul refers to the first person of the Trinity as "the (our) God and Father." Compare 1 Cor. 15:24 and Eph. 5:20: τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρί; Phil. 4:20: τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ ἡμῶν; Gal. 1:4, 1 Thess. 1:3, and 3:13: τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς ἡμῶν; 1 Thess. 3:11: ὁ θεός καὶ πατὴρ ἡμῶν. We find an expansion of this phrase in the common expression: "the God and Father of the (our) Lord Jesus (Christ)." Compare Rom. 15:6: τὸν θεὸν καὶ πατέρα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ; 2 Cor. 1:3 and Eph. 1:3: ὁ θεός καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ; 2 Cor. 11:31: ὁ θεός καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ. A significant inversion of the nouns πατὴρ and θεός is found in 2 Cor. 1:3b: "the Father of mercies and God of all comfort" (ὁ πατὴρ ... καὶ θεός). The last passage in Paul illustrating Sharp's Rule is 1 Tim. 6:15: "He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords" (ὁ βασιλεὺς ... καὶ κύριος).

Peter is fully as fond of the idiom. In 1 Pet. 1:3 he says: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord

Jesus Christ" (ὁ θεός καὶ πατήρ). In 2:25 he refers to Christ as "the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls" (τὸν ποιμένα καὶ ἐπίσκοπον). In 5:1 he refers to himself as "your fellow-elder and witness" (ὁ συμπρεσβύτερος καὶ μάρτυς). Four passages, very similar to each other, are found in the second epistle: "the (our) Lord and Savior (Jesus Christ)" (τοῦ κυρίου καὶ σωτήρος). They are found at 1:11, 2:20, 3:2, and 3:18.

I shall not extend the discussion by citing at length the remaining examples of Sharp's Rule which employ nouns. They can be found at Hébr. 3:1, 12:2; James 1:27, 3:9; 1 John 5:20; Jude 4; Rev. 1:6, and 1:9. In these passages, as in all the foregoing, Sharp's Rule is found to be a valid principle -- without a single exception!

The Passages Involving Christ's Deity

We can surely understand why Sharp felt so convinced that Christ is referred to as "God" (θεός) in the five passages cited near the beginning of this article. For if his rule is applied to these passages, this would seem to be the inevitable result. In the paragraphs which follow, I would like to evaluate briefly his conclusions.

Ephesians 5:5: "in the kingdom of the Christ and God" (a literal translation of ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ). This clearly fits the pattern of Sharp's Rule (definite article + singular personal noun + καὶ + singular personal noun), and it would indeed seem natural to take both "Christ" and "God" as references to the same individual, namely, the second person of the Trinity. It is true that the phrase, "of Christ and God" is very brief, containing no modifiers. But it is no briefer than the phrase "to the God and Father" (τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρί) in a very similar passage at 1 Cor. 15:24: "when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father." Or compare the phrase "the Lord and Father" (a literal translation of τὸν κύριον καὶ πατέρα) in James 3:9: "With it we bless [the] Lord and Father; and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God." Nor does the fact that the noun "God" follows the copulative (καὶ) remove our passage from the application of the rule. For in 2 Cor. 1:3 we have the phrase "the

Father ... and God" (ὁ πατήρ ... καὶ θεός), and in this verse no one would hesitate to apply both nouns to the same individual, here God the Father.

It should be pointed out, moreover, that if Paul had not desired to call Jesus both "Christ" and "God" in Eph. 5:5, he could have accomplished this easily in either of two ways. He could, first, have eliminated the article from both of the nouns. For when in Greek two singular personal nouns of the same case are connected by καί and neither of them has an article, the first of them generally denotes a person different from the second. The examples of this in the New Testament are many. Compare the sentence with which Paul begins so many of his epistles: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) -- found in substantially this same form at Rom. 1:7, 1 Cor. 1:3, 2 Cor. 1:2, Gal. 1:3, Eph. 1:2, Phil. 1:2, 2 Thess. 1:2, 1 Tim. 1:2, 2 Tim. 1:2, Titus 1:4, and Philemon 3. Other significant examples are the following: Gal. 1:1: "through Jesus Christ, and God the Father" (διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ πατρὸς); Eph. 6:23: "from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ); 1 Thess. 1:1 and 2 Thess. 1:1: "in God the (our) Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (ἐν θεῷ πατρὶ [ἡμῶν] καὶ κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ); 1 Tim. 1:1: "according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, who is our hope" (κατ' ἐπιταγὴν θεοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τῆς ἐλπίδος ἡμῶν); James 1:1: "a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" (θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δούλος). So, if Paul had wished to refer to two persons in our passage, he could have written ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ, with no article before either noun: "in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

There is a second way in which Paul could have kept us from taking the "God" of Eph. 5:5 as a reference to Jesus. He could have used an article before both of the nouns, for with this usage the holy writers often do refer to two distinct persons. Compare the following: 1 Cor. 3:8: "he who plants and he who waters" (ὁ φυτεύων ... καὶ ὁ ποτίζων); 1 Thess. 3:11: "Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you" (αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ θεός καὶ πατήρ ἡμῶν καὶ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς ...); 2 Thess. 2:16: "Now may our Lord

Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father ..." (αὐτός δὲ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός καὶ ὁ θεός ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν); 1 John 2:22: "the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son" (... τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱόν); Rev. 11:15: "the kingdom ... of our Lord, and of His Christ" (ἡ βασιλεία ... τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν καὶ τοῦ χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ); 14:4: "as first fruits to God and to the Lamb" (ἀπαρχὴ τῷ θεῷ καὶ τῷ ἀρνίῳ); 20:6: "priests of God and of Christ" (ἱερεῖς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ). If, therefore, Paul had wished to refer to two persons in Eph. 5:5, he could also have written ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ τοῦ θεοῦ, with an article before each of the nouns: "in the kingdom of the Christ and of God."

But because Paul, now, in our passage employed an article before "Christ" and not before "God," we feel compelled to conclude that he wished thereby to refer both nouns to the person of Jesus: "in the kingdom of the Christ and God." And note well that the arguments presented in these last paragraphs would apply equally to the passages which follow!

2 Thessalonians 1:12: "according to the grace of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ" (a literal translation of κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). If Paul had wished to refer to both the Father and the Son in this verse, how easily he could have inserted τοῦ before κυρίου. He is not at all reluctant to do so in other places of this epistle. (Cf. the first part of our verse, and also 2:1, 2:14, and 3:18.) The fact that the apostle omitted the article prompts us to refer both nouns, "God" and "Lord," to Jesus Christ. Note in this connection how the commentators have no difficulty in rightly applying Sharp's Rule to a similar passage like 1 Tim. 6:15: "the King ... and Lord" (ὁ βασιλεὺς ... καὶ κύριος), where both nouns also refer to one and the same person.

1 Timothy 5:21: "in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus" (ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ). In this verse I find myself unable to accept Sharp's exegesis. He takes the verse in this sense: "in the presence of Jesus, the God and Christ." To do this he finds it necessary to split the phrase Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ. But this seems a questionable procedure, inasmuch as the phrases "Jesus Christ" and "Christ Jesus" occur so commonly in

the New Testament in compound form. In the Nestle text (20th ed.) the former is found one hundred thirty-one times, and the latter ninety-four times. It seems, therefore, that we ought not divide the phrase as Sharp has here done, when he takes Χριστοῦ as a personal noun, and Ἰησοῦ as a proper name in apposition with τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Χριστοῦ.

One additional point can be made. The lack of an article after καὶ does not seem to be significant in this verse, as it indeed is in the two passages discussed above. For the phrases "Jesus Christ" and "Christ Jesus" are used almost always without an article in the New Testament. (I found only four examples that did have an article: Matt. 1:18, Acts 5:42, Eph. 3:11, and Col. 2:6.) It would seem that "Jesus Christ" and "Christ Jesus" had become compound proper names by the time the epistles were written, and for this reason also they would not be subject to Sharp's Rule.

I am therefore disinclined to agree with Sharp that the word "God" should here be referred to the same person as the word "Christ." Paul could well have had both the Father and the Son in mind, even as he certainly did in a similar passage at 2 Pet. 1:2: "of God and of Jesus" (τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Ἰησοῦ). And what is said here of 1 Timothy 5:21 would apply equally to 2 Timothy 4:1, which in the Nestle text presents an identical wording.

Titus 2:13: "looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus" (προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ). If Paul had wanted to refer to both the Father and the Son in this verse, he could have readily inserted an article before σωτῆρος. We note how the noun "Savior" is generally used with an article in the Pastoral Epistles. (Cf. 1 Tim. 2:3; Titus 1:3, 1:4, 2:10, 3:4, 3:6; 2 Tim. 1:10.) The fact that the apostle did not use it in our verse seems significant -- he wished to apply both titles, "the great God" and "Savior," to Christ Jesus.

2 Peter 1:1: "by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ" (ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). It is significant that this same genitive phrase occurs in two other passages of this

epistle, 1:11 and 3:18 -- with the change of a single word, κυρίου instead of θεοῦ: τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν καὶ σωτήρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. (Cf. also 2:20 and 3:2.) I know of no commentator or grammarian who in verses 1:11 and 3:18 would hesitate to refer both nouns, "Lord" and "Savior," to Jesus Christ. But why, then, do some of them object when Sharp and others insist that in our verse both nouns, "God" and "Savior," be referred to Jesus Christ? For the syntactic construction of the three passages is exactly the same! The answer would seem to lie in some kind of dogmatic or theological bias. I myself confidently join Sharp in asserting that our verse must be taken as another proof passage for the deity of Christ.

The Conclusions of This Evaluation

After this somewhat lengthy evaluation of Sharp's Rule and his exegetical findings, I can afford to be brief in my own conclusions. Sharp's Rule appears to be a well-founded and accurate description of the usage of the article which it covers: *when two singular personal nouns of the same case are coupled by καὶ and only the first has the article, both nouns uniformly refer to the same individual.* And I am also very ready to accept the following verses as proof passages for Christ's deity: Ephesians 5:5, 2 Thessalonians 1:12, Titus 2:13, and 2 Peter 1:1.

I am, of course, aware of the fact that a number of grammarians fail to cite the rule of Sharp as a valid principle, and that many commentators refuse to accept his exegetical conclusions. It is my hope to discuss the reasons for this contradictory situation in the next article of this series.

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