Journal: Tyndale Bulletin
Volume: TYNBUL 62:1 (NA 2011)
Article: The Christology Of Titus 2:13 And 1 Timothy 2:5
Author: J. Christopher Edwards

The Christology Of Titus 2:13 And 1 Timothy 2:5

J. Christopher Edwards

Summary

This article makes an acute observation about the strong similarities between Titus 2:11-14 and 1 Timothy 2:1-7. These similarities are significant because they suggest that it is not valid to translate Titus 2:13 as: 'The glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.' This traditional translation affirms Jesus' deity by ascribing to him the title of θεός.

1. Introduction

ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν ᾽Ιησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Titus 2:13)

Εἷς γὰρ θεός, εἷς καὶ μεσίτης θεοῦ καὶ ἀνθρώπων, ἄνθρωπος Χριστὸς ᾽Ιησοῦς (1 Timothy 2:5)

Titus 2:13 is one of the few passages in the New Testament that could explicitly affirm Jesus' deity by ascribing to him the title of θεός.[1] The connection between ᾽Ιησοῦς Χριστός and θεός in Titus 2:13 is founded on the grammatical principle known as Granville Sharp's rule. In this short study, I will briefly review this rule and the translational options it affords Titus 2:13. I will then examine the greater context of Titus 2:11-14 and the parallel context of1 Timothy 2:1-7. These two passages have strong similarities, which is not surprising since the same author likely wrote Titus and 1 Timothy.[2]

Among these similarities are an emphasis on God's universal salvation, an exhortation for godly living, and the influence of Isaiah 42:6-7; 49:6-8. Perhaps the most important similarity is the dependence on a tradition that is similar to Mark 10:45. The dependence on this tradition is widely recognised. What is not widely recognised, however, is that directly preceding this tradition in both Titus and 1 Timothy is a statement including θεός plus ᾽Ιησοῦς Χριστός or Χριστὸς ᾽Ιησοῦς. In 1 Timothy 2:5 it is obvious that the nounθεός does not apply toΧριστὸς ᾽Ιησοῦς. Given all the similarities betweenTitus 2:11-14 and 1 Timothy 2:1-7, we should come to the same conclusions regarding θεός and ᾽Ιησοῦς Χριστός in Titus 2:13.

The purpose of this article is not to give an exhaustive account of the research surrounding the Christology of the Pastorals. Rather the purpose is to make an acute observation about the strong similarities between Titus 2:11-14 and 1 Timothy 2:1-7 and then to note the significance of those similarities for the Christology of Titus 2:13.

2. The Grammatical Argument

According to D. B. Wallace, Granville Sharp's rule asserts that in an article-nounκαί-noun construction 'the second noun refers to the *same* person mentioned with the first noun when: (1) neither is *im*personal; (2) neither is *plural*; (3) neither is a *proper* name'.[3] In other words, both nouns in Sharp's construction have the same referent when they are personal, singular, and not proper. Wallace has made the strongest case for the validity of Sharp's rule in Titus 2:13.[4] If

Wallace is correct then the entire construction, τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν, must refer to the same person.[5] There are two possible translations of

Titus 2:13 in which the entire construction does refer to the same person. The first, which is preferred by Wallace, translates Titus 2:13 as: 'The glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.' In this translation the construction, τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν, refers to Jesus Christ and explicitly affirms his deity.[6] The second translation maintains Sharp's rule, but does not identify Jesus with θεός. It translates Titus 2:13 as: 'The appearance of the glory of our great God and saviour, Jesus Christ.' In this translation the construction, τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν, refers to God (θεός). Ἰησοῦς Χριστός is seen to be in apposition to glory (δόξα), though glory is part of the entire phrase 'the glory of our great God and saviour'.[7] A final position believes that Granville Sharp's rule does not apply to the construction in Titus 2:13, and the verse should be translated as: 'The glorious appearing of the great God, and of our saviour Jesus Christ.'[8]

The purpose of the next section is to highlight an unnoticed line of contextual evidence that supports those who argue against identifying

Jesus with θεός in Titus 2:13. This includes those who uphold Sharp's rule, but see the construction, τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν, as referring to God, not Jesus. It also includes those who do not apply Sharp's rule in Titus 2:13.

3. The Contextual Argument

The force of the argument in this section is grounded on the strong similarities between the same author's statements in Titus 2:11-14 and 1 Timothy 2:1-7. These similarities include: (1) the universal extension of salvation; (2) the exhortation for godly living; (3) the influence of Isaiah 42:6-7; 49:6-8; (4) the use of a tradition that is similar to Mark 10:45; (5) the introduction of the Mark 10:45 tradition with a reference to θεός plus Ἰησοῦς Χριστός or Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς. Similarities one through three concern the greater contexts of Titus 2:11-14 and 1 Timothy 2:1-7. Similarities four and five address the tradition of which Titus 2:13 and 1 Timothy 2:5 are directly a part. It is important to note that similarities four and five are the most crucial ones for the argument, whereas similarities one through three are more supportive, so that if one does not agree with, for example, similarity number three (the common influence of Isaiah 42:6-7; 49:6-8) then that does not undercut the overall argument.

3.1 The Universal Extension Of Salvation

One of the major motifs in Titus 2:11-14 and 1 Timothy 2:1-7 is the universal extension of salvation. In Titus 2:11, the author states that the appearance of the grace of God has brought salvation to all people (σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις). In 1 Timothy 2:1-7, the same author emphasises salvation for all people (πάντων ἀνθρώπων–2:1; πάντας ἀνθρώπους–2:4).

3.2 The Exhortation For Godly Living

In Titus 2:11-12, the author says that the same grace that appeared and brought salvation to all people trains us to live wisely, justly, and godly in the present age (σωφρόνως καὶ δικαίως καὶ εὐσεβῶς ζήσωμεν ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι). In 1 Timothy 2:1-2, the same author says that prayers should be made for all people, especially those in authority, so that we might lead a peaceful and quiet life in all

godliness and reverence (ἥρεμον καὶ ἡσύχιον βίον διάγωμεν ἐν πάσῃ εὐσεβείᾳ καὶ σεμνότητι).

3.3 The Influence Of Isaiah 42:6-7; 49:6-8

I have argued elsewhere that Isaiah 42:6-7; 49:6-8 is influencing some of the ideas in Titus 2:11-14 and 1 Timothy 2:1-7.[9] It was common for early Christian writers to appeal to Isaiah 42:6-7 and/or 49:6-8 in order to justify the universal extension of salvation.[10] If one thinks of Titus 2:11-14 and 1 Timothy 2:1-7 in the context of early Christian appeals to scripture supporting the extension of salvation to everyone, then it would hardly be a surprise if Isaiah 42:6-7; 49:6-8 were behind the universal emphasis of Titus 2:11-14 and 1 Timothy 2:1-7.

Further support for the influence of Isaiah 42:6-7; 49:6-8 on Titus is that the two ἵνα clauses following the self-giving statement in Titus 2:14 are almost completely parallel to Barnabas 14:6.

Titus 2:14a	ἵνα λυτρώσηται	ἡμᾶς	ἀπὸ πάσης ἀνομίας
Barnabas 14:6a	λυτρωσάμενον	ἡμᾶς	ἐκ τοῦ σκότους,
Titus 2:14b	καὶ καθαρίσῃ	ἑαυτῷ	λαὸν περιούσιον
Barnabas 14:6b	ἑτοιμᾶσαι	ἑαυτῷ	λαὸν ἅγιον

Barnabas 14:6 is nothing more than the author's summary of Isaiah 42:6-7; 49:6-7, which is quoted in Barnabas 14:7-8.[11] Given the strong parallel between Barnabas 14:6 and the two ἵνα clauses in Titus 2:14, one is certainly justified to suggest that like Barnabas 14:6, the two ἵνα clauses in Titus 2:14 are also a summary of Isaiah 42:6-7; 49:6-7.

Further support for the influence of Isaiah 42:6-7; 49:6-8 on 1 Timothy 2:5-6—1 Timothy 2:5-6 are the verses parallel to

Titus 2:14—is that the language of mediator (μεσίτης) in 1 Timothy 2:5 likely implies a covenant (διαθήκη).[12] The vocabulary of ברית/διαθήκη occurs in Isaiah 42:6 and 49:8,[13] and it is probable that the peculiar phrase, ברית עם, in Isaiah 42:6 and 49:8 indicates a covenant mediator (μεσίτης).[14]

In sum, the influence of Isaiah 42:6-7; 49:6-8 makes sense of the two ἵνα clauses and the universal perspective in Titus 2:11-14, as well as the idea of a covenant mediator combined with the universal perspective in 1 Timothy 2:1-7. The influence of Isaiah adds another layer of similarity between Titus 2:11-14 and 1 Timothy 2:1-7. Not only does the same author showcase the same universal emphasis, but that emphasis is guided by the same influence from Isaiah 42:6-7; 49:6-8.

3.4 The Use Of A Tradition That Is Similar To Mark 10:45

The comparison below demonstrates why there is little doubt among scholars that 1 Timothy 2:6 and Titus 2:14 are influenced by a version of the tradition found in Mark 10:45.[15] Clearly the same author is drawing on the same tradition in 1 Timothy 2:6 and Titus 2:14.

Mark 10:45

καὶ δοῦναι	τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ	λύτρον	ἀντὶ πολλῶν

1 Timothy 2:6

ὁ δοὺς	ἑαυτὸν	ἀντίλυτρον	ὑπὲρ πάντων

Titus 2:14

ἔδωκεν	ἑαυτὸν	ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν,	ἵνα λυτρώσηται

3.5 The Introduction Of The Mark 10:45 Tradition With A Reference To Θεός Plus ᾽Ιησοῦς Χριστός Or Χριστὸς ᾽Ιησοῦς

In both Titus 2:13 and 1 Timothy 2:5, the same author introduces the same tradition, which is parallel to Mark 10:45, with the same reference to θεός plus ᾽Ιησοῦς Χριστός or Χριστὸς ᾽Ιησοῦς. In 1 Timothy 2:5 the author states: Εἷς γὰρ θεός, εἷς καὶ μεσίτης θεοῦ καὶ ἀνθρώπων, ἄνθρωπος Χριστὸς ᾽Ιησοῦς. This statement is similar to the *Shema*.[16] It is clear from this statement that θεός and Χριστὸς ᾽Ιησοῦς refer to two separate persons. In Titus 2:13, the same author states: ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν ᾽Ιησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Given all the other similarities with 1 Timothy, it is very likely that the same author would similarly wish θεός and ᾽Ιησοῦς Χριστός to be distinguished as two persons.

4. Conclusion

In short, the argument of this study is that the same author of Titus 2:11-14 and 1 Timothy 2:1-7 makes the same claims for universal salvation, gives the same exhortation for godly living, draws on the same influence from Isaiah 42:6-7; 49:6-8, uses the same tradition that is similar to Mark 10:45, precedes that tradition with the same vocabulary of θεός plus ᾽Ιησοῦς Χριστός or Χριστὸς ᾽Ιησοῦς, and has the same christology that identifies θεός and ᾽Ιησοῦς Χριστός as two different persons. The alternative to this conclusion would be to admit all the similarities, but then assert that the same author has a fundamentally different christology in Titus 2:13 and 1 Timothy 2:5. Such an assertion is, in my opinion, very unlikely. Therefore, it is not valid to translate Titus 2:13 as: 'The glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.'

One final note: The few differences between 1 Timothy 2:1-7 and Titus 2:11-14—the focus on mediatory prayer in 1 Timothy 2:2-4 and the expectation of Jesus' ἐπιφάνεια in Titus 2:13—do not, in my opinion, affect the argument of this essay.[17]

---

[1] Also see, for example, Rom. 9:5; 2 Pet. 1:1.

[2] The argument of this short study rests on the widely held assumption that the same author wrote 1 Tim. and Titus. According to P. H. Towner, when the single authorship of the Pastorals is challenged, it is normally only to exclude 2 Tim. (*The Letters to Timothy and Titus* [NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006]: 27). There are, however, some scholars who are attempting to revive an older argument that 1 Tim. and Titus have different authors. For example, J. Herzer argues that the author of 1 Tim. is dependent on Titus and 2 Tim., which were written earlier by a different author, or different authors ('Rearranging the "House of God": A New Perspective on the Pastoral Epistles' in *Empsychoi Logoi – Religious Innovations in Antiquity: Studies in Honour of Pieter Willem van der Horst*, ed. A. Houtman, A. de Jong, and M. Misset-van de Weg [AJEC 73;

Leiden: Brill, 2008]: 547-66).

[3] D. B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996): 271-72 – Italics original.

[4] D. B. Wallace, *Granville Sharp's Canon and Its Kin: Semantics and Significance* (SBG 14; New York: Peter Lang, 2009): 241-64. I chose to interact with Wallace simply because his work represents the most recent and extensive treatment of Granville Sharp's rule.

[5] This depends on θεός not being a proper name.

[6] In addition to Wallace, the other person typically cited in defence of this translation is M. J. Harris, 'Titus 2:13 and the Deity of Christ' in *Pauline Studies: Essays Presented to Professor F. F. Bruce on His 70th Birthday*, ed. D. A. Hagner and M. J. Harris (Exeter: Paternoster, 1980): 262-77; *Jesus as God: The New Testament Use of Theos in Reference to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992): 173-85. Also see A. Y. Lau, *Manifest in Flesh: The Epiphany Christology of the Pastoral Epistles* (WUNT 2/86; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996): 243-50; G. W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992): 321-26; J. D. Quinn, *The Letter to Titus* (AB 35; New York: Doubleday, 1990): 155-56.

[7] Those supporting this translation include G. Fee, *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007): 440-46; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 750-58. It is significant for this translation that Jesus is associated with the appearance of the grace of God in Titus 2:11. Jesus is also associated with the appearance of *'the kindness and the love of mankind* of God our saviour' (ἡ χρηστότης καὶ ἡ φιλανθρωπία ἐπεφάνη τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ) in Titus 3:4. Therefore, it should not be problematic for him to be associated with the appearance of the glory of our great God and saviour in Titus 2:13 (Jesus is closely associated with God's glory elsewhere in Pauline literature [e.g. 2 Cor. 4:6]). However, Wallace argues that in Titus 2:13 the six words between δόξα and ᾽Ιησοῦς Χριστός create too great a distance for apposition (*Granville Sharp's Canon*, 257-58). This criticism can be dampened by asserting that the apposition in Titus 2:13 is between ᾽Ιησοῦς Χριστός and the whole phrase: 'the glory of our great God and saviour' (cf. Col. 2:2).

[8] In support of this position, which is in the present minority, see M. Dibelius and H. Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972; tr. P. Buttolph and A. Yarbro): 143; L. Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003): 516 n. 69; F. Young, *The Theology of The Pastoral Letters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994): 53 n. 7.

[9] J. C. Edwards, 'Reading the Ransom Logion in 1 Tim. 2,6 and Titus 2,14 with Isaiah 42,6-7; 49,6-8', *Bib* 90 (2009): 264-66.

[10] Luke 2:32; Acts 13:47; 26:23; Barn. 14:1-8; Justin, *Dial*. 26; 121-122; Tertullian, *Adv*. *Jud*. 12; *Marc*. 3.20.4; 5.6.1.

[11] Barn. 14:6 γέγραπται γὰρ πῶς αὐτῷ ὁ πατὴρ ἐντέλλεται, λυτρωσάμενον ἡμᾶς ἐκ τοῦ σκότους, ἑτοιμᾶσαι ἑαυτῷ λαὸν ἅγιον.

Barn. 14:7 λέγει οὖν ὁ προφήτης· ᾽Εγὼ Κύριος ὁ Θεός σου ἐκάλεσά σε ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, καὶ κρατήσω τῆς χειρός σου καὶ ἐνισχύσω σε, καὶ ἔδωκά σε εἰς διαθήκην γένους, εἰς φῶς ἐθνῶν, ἀνοῖξαι ὀφθαλμοὺς τυφλῶν, καὶ ἐξαγαγεῖν ἐκ δεσμῶν πεπεδημένους καὶ ἐξ οἴκου φυλακῆς καθημένους ἐν σκότει (Isa. 42:6-7). γινώσκομεν οὖν πόθεν ἐλυτρώθημεν.

Barn. 14:8 πάλιν ὁ προφήτης λέγει· ᾽Ιδού, τέθεικά σε εἰς φῶς ἐθνῶν, τοῦ εἶναί σε εἰς σωτηρίαν ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς· οὕτως λέγει Κύριος ὁ λυτρωσάμενός σε Θεός (Isa. 49:6-7).

[12] In the New Testament, μεσίτης is almost always linked with the idea of covenant (Gal. 3:19-20; Heb. 8:6; 9:15; 12:24).

[13] There is a LXX variant of διαθήκη in Isa. 49:6.

[14] Isa. 42:6 and 49:8 are the only places where עם ברית occurs in the Hebrew Bible. The rarity and difficulty of this phrase has generated much debate. For a brief discussion see M. S. Smith, 'Bĕrît 'am/Bĕrît 'ôlām: A New Proposal for the Crux of Isa. 42:6', *JBL* 100 (1981): 241-43. If taken as an objective genitive then a mediator is implied, i.e. a covenant [mediator] with the people.

[15] E.g. Lau, *Manifest in Flesh*, 82-83; I. H. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999): 431; J. Roloff, *Der erste Brief an Timotheus* (EKKNT 15; Zürich: Benziger Verlag, 1988): 111-12; H. Stettler, *Die Christologie der Pastoralbriefe* (WUNT 2/103; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998): 67; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 183; et al.

[16] Cf. Rom. 3:30, Gal. 3:20, 1 Cor. 8:6.

[17] ἐπιφάνεια and ἐπιφαίνω only refer to Jesus elsewhere in the Pastorals (1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 1:10; 4:1; 4:8; Titus 2:11; 3:4). Translating Titus 2:13 as: 'The appearance *of the glory* of our great God and saviour, Jesus Christ' closely associates Jesus with the glory of God, and also therefore the ἐπιφάνεια (See Titus 3:4).

current : : uid:2666 (drupal)