

1 Timothy 6:14-16

(14) To keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,

(15) which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords,

(16) who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen. (*NIV*)

1. It is stated by Trinitarians that since God is called “King of kings and Lord of lords,” as is Christ, that Christ must be God. However, simply because the same title is used for two individuals does not mean that they are actually somehow one being. Before any conclusion is drawn about the title, we should search all of Scripture to see if we can determine how the title is used. A thorough search reveals that the phrase “king of kings” simply means “the best king.” In Ezra 7:12, Artaxerxes is called “the king of kings” because he was the most powerful king at the time. Consider also Ezekiel 26:7: “For this is what the Sovereign Lord says: ‘From the north I am going to bring against Tyre Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, king of kings, with horses and chariots, with horsemen and a great army.’ ” God again calls Nebuchadnezzar “king of kings” in Daniel 2:37. Nebuchadnezzar was the most powerful king of his day, and the Bible calls him “king of kings.” Thus, Scripture shows us that having the title “king of kings” does not make a person God. In the Bible, other powerful kings had that title, and no one denies that Jesus Christ is a powerful king and thus is also worthy of it.

2. In the Semitic languages, the genitive case was often used to express the fact that something was the “best.” Thus, “the best king” was designated as “the king of kings,” *etc.* When Daniel revealed King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, Nebuchadnezzar called Daniel’s God a “God of gods,” and that was long before Nebuchadnezzar realized much about the true God. He was simply stating that since Daniel’s God could interpret dreams so well, he was “the best god.” When Noah spoke of the future of Canaan, he foretold that Canaan would be “a servant of servants” (Gen. 9:25 - *KJV*). We use the same terminology in our English vernacular to express the greatness of something: “The sale of sales” is the biggest sale, and “the deal of deals” is the best deal.

3. When properly interpreted, 1 Timothy 6:14-16 is a strong refutation of the Trinity. Unfortunately, the Greek text has been translated with two different slants. A few versions, including the *KJV*, make the verse read such that Christ shows the Father to the world: “He [Jesus Christ] shall show who is the blessed and only Potentate [*i.e.*, God].” The vast majority of the versions and most of the commentators, however, state that the verse reads differently. They testify that the verse can be very naturally translated to read that God will bring about the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. And this is exactly the testimony of the rest of Scripture—there will come a day when God will send Jesus back to earth (Acts 3:20). The *NASB* does a good job of translating the Greek text and staying faithful to the meaning: “...until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which He will bring about at the proper time—He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords; who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable

light; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him *be* honor and eternal dominion! Amen.”

The *NIV* carries the same meaning but, by substituting “God” for “He,” makes the verse a little easier for the reader: “...until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.”

In both these versions, the ending eulogy refers to God. God alone is the one who is immortal and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. Those words cannot be made to refer to Christ, who, although he occasionally takes on some of the titles or attributes of God, cannot accurately be referred to as ever dwelling in unapproachable light or as one whom no man can see.

The reason these verses so strongly testify against the Trinity is now clear. There are clearly *two beings* involved—“God” and Christ. And of the two, “God” is the “blessed and only ruler,” and He will bring about Christ’s return. If Christ were God, or an equal part of a “Triune” God, these verses would not differentiate between “God” and Christ by calling “God” the “only ruler.”

4. Jesus Christ has been given “all authority” by God. Jesus Christ is the Head of the Body of Christ, the one who will raise and judge the dead, and be the ruler of the next ages. He is called “King of kings and Lord of lords,” and as God’s vice-regent he is indeed that, but notice should be taken of the fact that Christ is never given the title, “God of gods.” That title is reserved for God alone, especially since Christ is not above God. Even after his resurrection and in his glorified body, he still called God, “my God” (John 20:17).

Buzzard, p. 48.

Dana, pp. 15 and 212.

Snedeker, pp. 383 and 452

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